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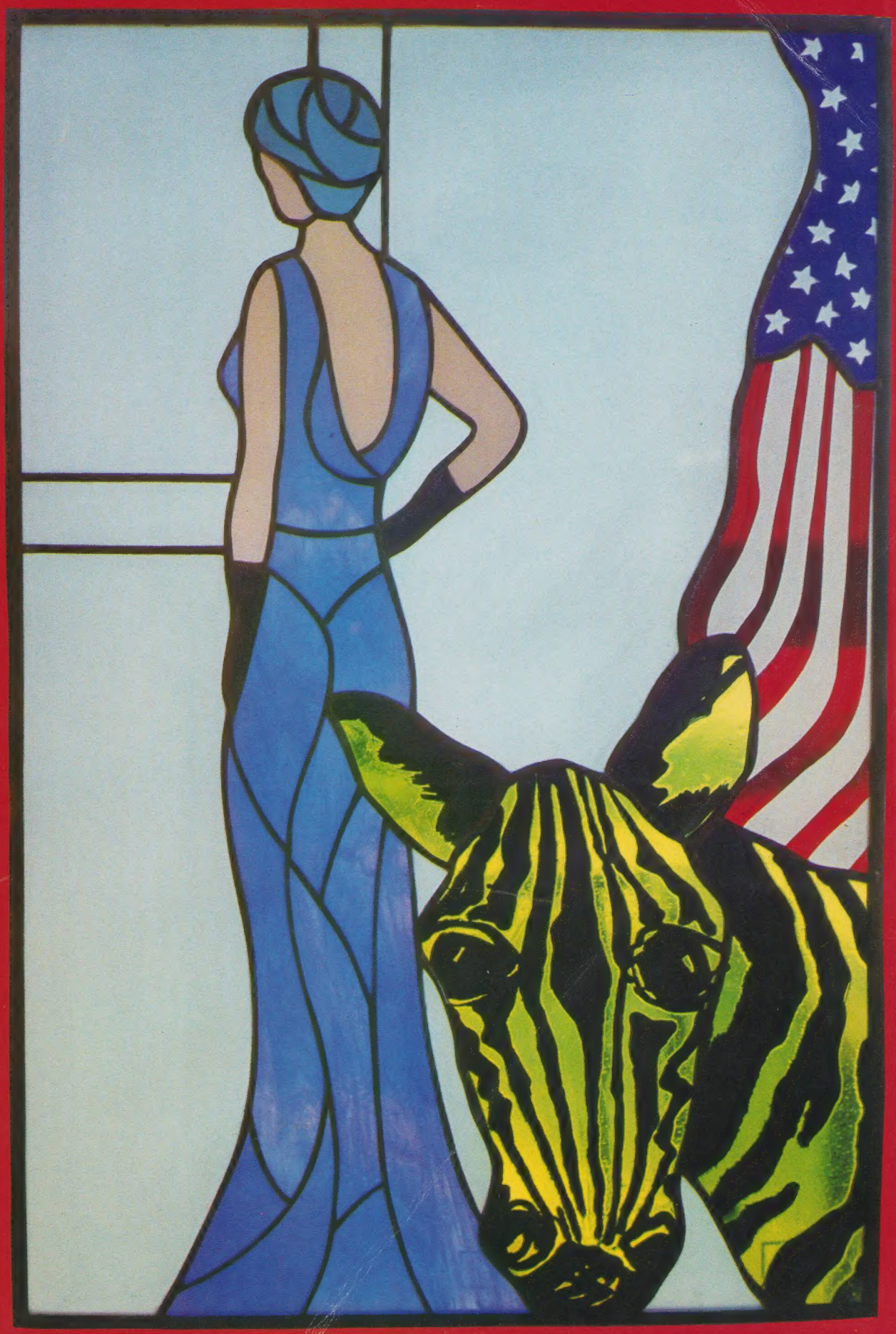

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Stephen Hogbin Book

Wood craftsmen and those who teach in this field should be

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Stephen Hogbin Book

Wood craftsmen and those who teach in this field should be interested to know that the book "Wood-Turning" written by Stephen Hogbin during his time in Australia is due to be published later this year.
The Crafts Council of Australia is able to make a special pre-publication offer through Craft Australia to ensure that those most interested will not miss out as only a small edition of this very special book will be available in Australia.
The book stems from the year that Stephen Hogbin one of the world's most innovative craftsmen spent at Melbourne State College where he was a "craftsman in residence." During that year he concentrated on wood-turning, exploring and extending the function of the lathe and discovering the possibilities of Australian native woods. He is deeply concerned with "the purpose of the object" and his objects range from an egg cup to a pillar for the entrance of a building. Whatever the object may be it makes an aesthetic statement that is original and exciting. This is superbly illustrated in colour and black and white photographs by Tony Boyd.

The book while not setting out to explain the techniques of wood turning in detail has much to offer craftsmen and teachers. It contains insights into Stephen Hogbin's approach to woodcraft, his use of found objects, his building of a lathe, and the way he uses it. There is also informative material provided by other craftsmen teachers at Melbourne State College regarding handling large pieces of wood for turning and describing the diverse possibilities in Australian timbers.

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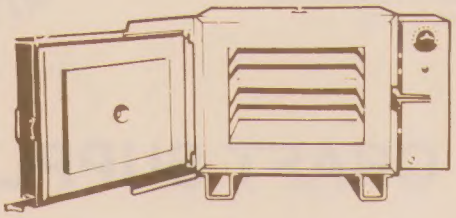

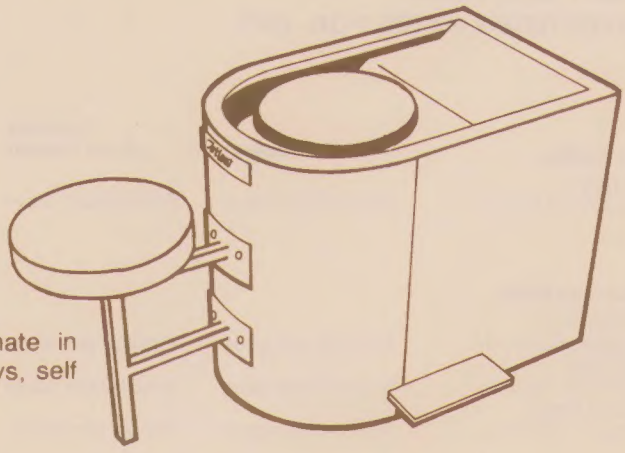

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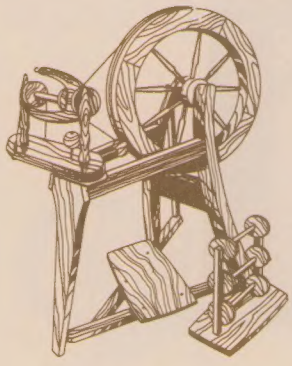

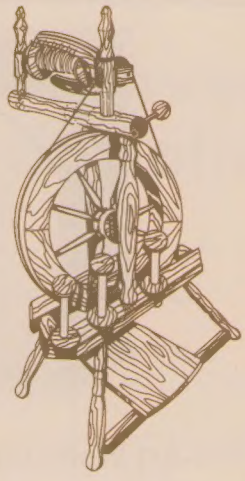

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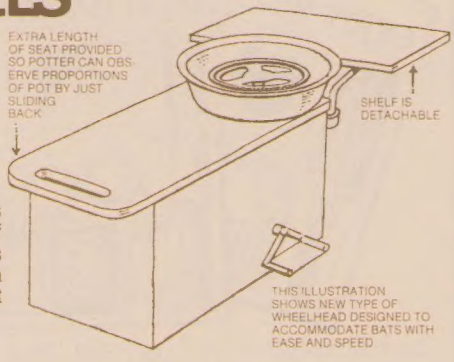
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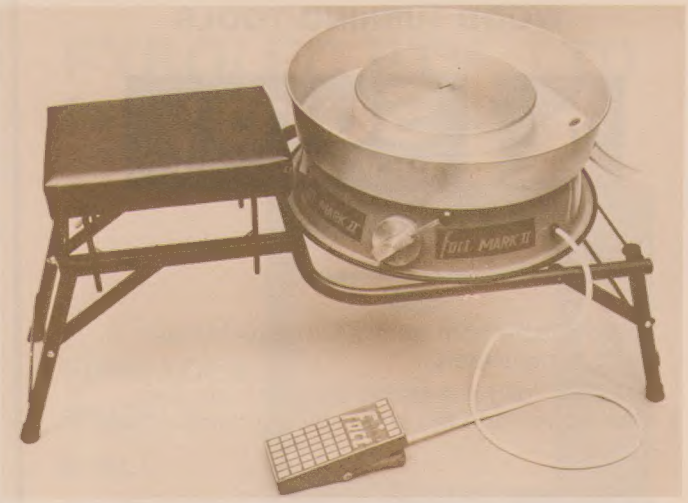

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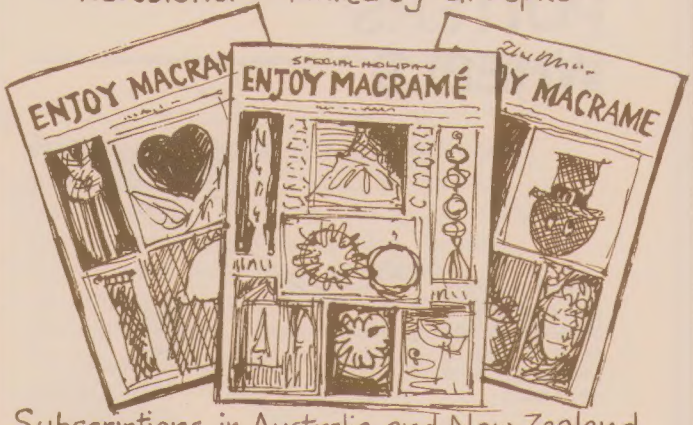

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Craft Australia

Spring 1979/3 **Cover**

'It's behind you all the Time' 1978
Warren Langley
Photography: Bruce Usher

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Editorial

From time to time a particular craft gains a tremendous impetus, very often from the careful nurturing of funding bodies who recognise the need and offer timely help. This has been the case with glass in Australia. A few years ago there were only about a dozen glass craftsmen in the whole country — now by virtue of assistance through the Crafts Board of the Australia Council who toured stimulating glass exhibitions, assisted visiting craftsmen, funded a travelling glass workshop, and generally helped in the educative process there appear to be hundreds of interested craftsmen turning to glass.

This issue of Craft Australia is not intended to be the definitive issue on glass but just to open the door to the past history of glass through Cedar Prest's informative article, and to look at the recent emergence of Australian glass with Jenny Zimmer, who has written a critical trilogy based on three major glass exhibitions of the immediate past.

We are also showing the work of a very talented young Australian, Elizabeth Kruger, whose hand-made quilts based on traditional designs were shown recently to many thousands of interested people at the Crafts Council of Australia Gallery. As well we are showing some antique American quilts to give a background to the history of quiltmaking.

Last year we ran an article on Samoan tattooing which proved to be of interest to a great many people all over the world. Since then we have received many requests to show Western style tattooing — almost a sociological cult in certain parts of our society. So just ahead of an international conference on the subject we offer you Nicholas Pounder's "Tattoo". But if craftsmen are tempted to begin the craft of self decoration please remember that only plastic surgery can remove the result.

The Crafts Council of Australia through the Resource Centre has been engaged for some time in a serious research programme on crafts as a livelihood and we hope to document the interesting material from this programme in Craft Australia at a later stage. However in this issue we have a story from Afghanistan which clearly shows the other side of the coin — the problems that beset a craftsman in a changing world. Just as a contrast we could not resist showing the gentle life of two Queensland leatherworkers making their living in our changing but comparatively peaceful world.

April Hersey

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Garry Benson

For many craftsmen weaving is a lonely, often boring pursuit, after the initial excitement of the designing and planning but for Garry Benson of Adelaide, this year's only Australian fibrist represented at Lausanne, weaving is a gregarious communal occupation. He likes to work surrounded by his friends, using his studio as a salon where ideas fly around him as he continues with the long hours of tapestry weaving.

"Sometimes as many as 500 hours go into a large weaving. I don't want to spend that time in isolation. I am involved in many other activities — films and video particularly and I often talk about ideas with my associates. I have long conversations too with sculptors and conceptual artists as I work. After a while it is as though my body takes over the mechanics of the act of weaving while I am discussing other ideas or listening to music. I feel it is quite possible to be absorbed in the act of weaving and yet still be able to free the mind to absorb other thoughts. It is a two dimensional act for me."

A man of intense energy with the dark hair and eyes of Brittany which was where his ancestors came from, Garry Benson has something of the same look as Archie Brennan, the Scottish weaver who was his tutor — the same active, sturdy physique that seems to make the tedious hours and the sheer hard work of weaving much easier to bear.

Weaving however is quite a new pursuit for Benson who served an apprenticeship in cinematography and has already had a successful career as both a cine cameraman and a director of film and video. Both Garry's grandfather and father were dedicated amateur photographers and he received his own first camera at the age of six. By the time he was eight years of age he was processing his own work and at 16 he was producing dozens of photographs every week. It was natural that he should enter the field as a professional. A Queensland boy, he served his cadetship with Cinetown Productions and began his career in newsreel work.

"It was really the end of the newsreel period and I soon turned to television. I worked with a series of television stations, first as a cameraman and then as a director. For some time I directed the news on Brisbane's Channel 7. By 1968 I was freelancing and then I began to be rather overwhelmed by the pressures of television and decided to attend a drama workshop with the R.A.D.A. in London.

"I took six months to get there, travelling via Japan, Hong Kong, India and Israel. At the time I had no real interest in the crafts as such. Now I wish I had taken a much closer look at the beautiful work around me, which at the time was only of passing interest."

Garry Benson stayed for six years in England working in many fields of film and photographic work. He also did freelance work in France and in Northern Ireland and in 1970 settled into commercial television at Southampton as director and promotor of various serials of the "Family at War" style.

"I lived in Wickham, a very beautiful village, for five years. It was delightful but I felt the pull to return to the sunshine of Australia."

Returning in 1974 he suffered a brief period where he was everything from a bowler hat salesman and wine waiter to an actor at a puppet theatre and then remembering how much he had liked Adelaide on an earlier visit in 1967 he moved there and soon took up an appointment as lecturer in film and television in the Department of Further Education. He continued to direct films and video and set out one day to direct a show for the Marleston School of Wool and Textiles.

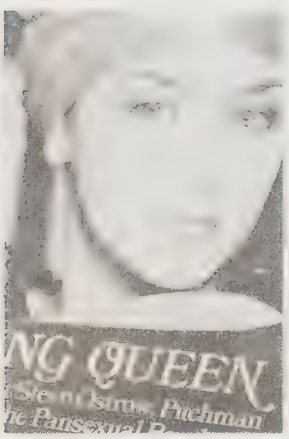
This turned out to be a fateful journey for once the film was over he enrolled at Marleston and set up his own loom.

"I was intrigued with the possibilities of weaving — of the visual possibilities in the woven image. The four shaft and two shaft weaving involvement is definitely not for me. I'm concerned primarily with visual shapes not patterns and waffles. I didn't really want to know about the complexities of the other type of weaving. Tapestry weaving is the perfect vehicle for me — although lately I've been wondering if I could not work out a lot of my ideas through screen printing."

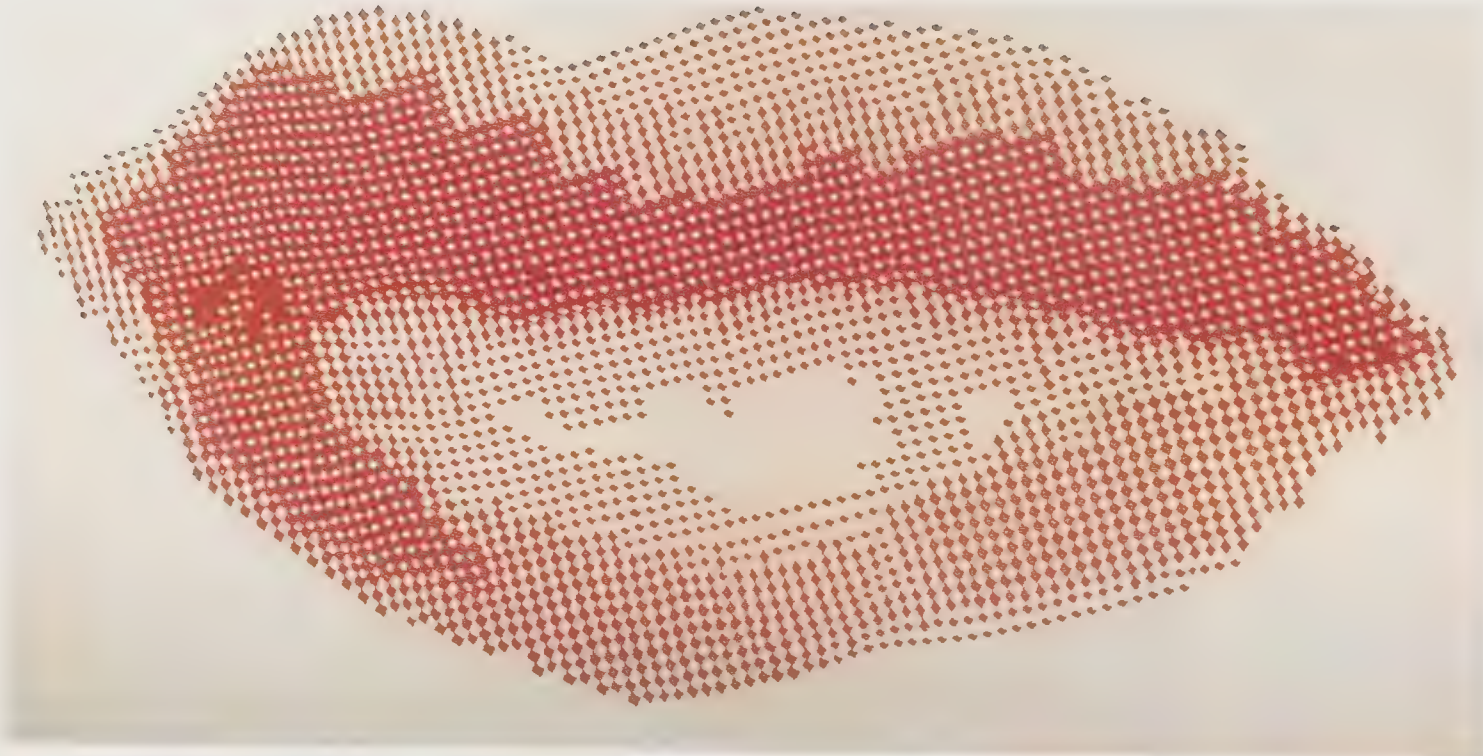
The arrival of weaver Archie Brennan in Australia to give two workshops was a perfect opportunity for Garry Benson to learn from a wonderfully experienced man who was deeply involved in the very field that most interested Benson — the stopped image of a photograph. Archie's series of television images fascinated Garry Benson and he was fortunate to have been chosen to attend the Brennan workshop in Armidale. Of all those who gained from Brennan's time in Australia, Garry has possibly gained most — two years to the day from the time he finished the Brennan workshop he received word that his tapestry idea had been accepted at the Lausanne Biennale.

An innocent in the structured world of the crafts in Australia Gary Benson did not know that a panel was set up each year by the Crafts Council of Australia to look at possible candidates for Lausanne and to assist them by using a Crafts Board grant, with the expenses involved in getting their presentation to Switzerland. Garry had heard of the Biennale through Archie Brennan, who had told his Armidale students that they should hold their reunion in Lausanne, so he sent off for catalogues, to gain some understanding of the range of works submitted, receiving back both catalogues and application forms. As a trial run and not holding out much hope he sent off an application,

The cover of Rolling Stone which inspired the tapestry



A detail



'Tip of your tongue'
160 cm x 295 cm

Garry Benson at work

'Tapestry One'

'Rouge Femme'

supported by photographs of his work, and to his delight was invited to enter, succeeding where the official entries from Australia (and incidentally from the United Kingdom also) were rejected. Only six entries were accepted from the United States, only 60 in all from 2000 entries. It is greatly to Garry Benson's credit that he succeeded and that through him Australia is being represented at Lausanne.

He received his letter of acceptance on his birthday and was both delighted and aghast. The work he had proposed was one that he had conceived whilst working at the Dovecote Studios, Archie Brennan's workshop in Edinburgh, where he had been a visiting craftsman for a few weeks, whilst holidaying in the United Kingdom. His project was a tapestry three metres wide and 1.8 metres deep, a luscious pair of feminine lips on a white background. At the moment when he received the invitation he had only half an inch completed and 20 weeks to go to complete the work. Four hundred and eighty hours later, with one day in hand, he sent it on its way.

The tapestry was taken from a cover of Rolling Stone, the lips extracted from an exquisite feminine face which had been printed on rough newsprint and so had all the necessary qualities of a stopped image, the tiny dots of the process of reproduction on the cover forming another inspiration for Garry Benson's fascination with the fast moving images of the media.

"I am interested and excited by the plethora of information that flies past us all the time in the media. There is never any time for critical evaluation and so what I want to do is to stop things and examine them in tiny detail. I've really had no art training except for a design course as part of my cinema training but what I hope to do is to show the intense energy in the stopped image. I want to explore all these possibilities. I want to show the inherent stillness and yet project the force of the media. Tapestry has an incredible glow, a sort of phosphorescence which to my mind inter-links with television. It is like a mirror image. I feel there are a whole lot of dimensions yet to come in my work."

Meanwhile Garry Benson continues working in television, producing films, videotapes and slide packs — his work covering everything from dramas to shearing sheds, all of which provides a stimulus for his own private work. A prolific weaver who has produced a number of major works and already been included in several national exhibitions during the last two years, Benson works 40 hours a week at his loom, as well as handling his teaching commitments and taking on additional workshop classes. Earlier this year he taught acting for television at a workshop held at the Educational Multi-Media Centre at Kilkenny for the Croydon Park Summer School of Performing Arts and went straight on to be tapestry tutor at the Crafts Council's Tatachilla Craft Summer School.

Privately he likes cooking and finds time to cook despite the fact that on top of all his other work he is fitting in studying for a Bachelor of Education degree at the Adelaide College of Arts.

"I like to be busy — the busier and more involved you are the more the ideas flow."

April Hersey

Glass and its Development

Glass is just beginning to become a strong craft in Australia after a long period of stagnation and craftsmen now have the opportunity to direct the best avenues for future development. Personally I want to see Australia produce a glass movement of originality, vitality and quality, not a duplication of overseas trends. Australia is a unique country and any craft which is going to flourish must put down roots into its own soil and grow in its own sunlight.

The history of glass in Australia up to this point does show very strongly influences from other countries. Stained glass has the longest history as a craft in Australia, probably having been imported from England in the 1880s in the form of fully made church windows of Victorian gothic style. When gold brought affluence, windows for both churches and homes were ordered from good traditional workshops and eventually our forebears duplicated the same method of production in Australia, importing materials, tradition and techniques.

What we inherited was the least artistic phase in the history of stained glass. Mediaeval windows were designed as an integral part of the architecture in which they functioned. The glass was selected to utilise the light entering the narrow slit windows to best effect. As time went on, and the architecture allowed larger window spaces, the windows became lighter and airier until the ultimate in floating window space in architecture was achieved in the 15th century. This was the period when silver stain was first developed and it contributed a quality of transparent gold light to the interiors.

After this the craft went into what I would call a self-conscious stage and divorce from architecture occurred. Stained glass artists began imitating oil painters and became obsessed with technique for its own sake. In the 17th century Charles II imported the very latest technique from Belgium, the fully painted windows in enamels — totally opaque. There was no reliance on coloured glass and the window was intended to be a decoration like a painting on a wall. The vital interdependence of the window on the light coming through the aperture in the architecture was ignored. The ultimate expression of this style was the Reynolds' "Virtues" in Oxford. A window with no coloured glass and no light coming through the glass. Lead became irrelevant to the craft as any lines were now unrelated to the drawing of the subject. The 18th century continued with this picture window tradition and the 19th century high point, which was the style we imported into Australia, is best represented by Holman Hunt's "Light of the World."

This divorce from architecture occurred partly through the system of making. We believe mediaeval windows were made on site by artisans and the resulting glass was well integrated into the architecture. The Victorian method of studio production was quite different providing standard designs which were simply adjusted into available window space. One ordered saints and roses by number from a catalogue. No craftsman visited the site to consider the atmosphere, the existence of other windows, or the availability, quality and aspect of the light which would affect the commissioned window.

In the studio there was a rigid heirarchy of labour. At the top was the designer, often an artist such as Burne Jones, who designed a full-sized cartoon to be copied by the studio. Again the building was never visited and the designer had nothing more to do with the actual making of the window. Next came the painter, the master craftsman who had to copy the drawing on to the glass with paint. Under him was the head glass cutter, who cut the design according to the artist's colour sketch. Below were leaders up, kiln firers and cementing boys. Training was by apprenticeship. A craftsman came in at the level of floor sweeping, graduated to firing and leading and if lucky to cutting. That was where craft amibition usually ended as the painter was generally drawn from an artistic background and was not expected to know about making up the window. No one person ever learned to practise all aspects of the craft and windows lacked feeling because they were not created especially for the site and they were painted by someone who had never conceived them.

This then was the tradition we imported and business boomed. At the turn of the century Adelaide had three major glass firms employing in all one hundred men. Glass was being used extensively in houses as well as churches and the English roses bloomed round many a villa door. But when the depression of the 1930s occurred demand for work fell off and the glass industry has never really recovered. As wages rose, the making of stained glass, a labour intensive craft, lacked sufficiently large profit margins to be attractive to industry.

In the twelve years I have lived in Adelaide I have watched the gradual easing out of all craft aspects of glass from the major firms. Apprenticeships in leadlight no longer exist in Adelaide and in fact appear only to exist at Yenckens in Melbourne where they were revived in 1974. There is a distinction between a leadlight and a stained glass apprenticeship. Leadlight is all stages from cementing to leading up and stained glass includes painting and staining. As most Australian apprenticeships have been for leadlighting only, the lack of design is reflected in the bulk of the work we see here.

Since Coventry Cathedral, and because training became available in English art schools there has recently been a new stream of independent stained glass artists who were taught all stages of production with the major emphasis on the design and painting at the expense of good technique. As one of these glass artists I found studio experience hard to find but essential. Because I both design and cut, I am working directly with coloured light to interpret my ideas and I firmly believe that every window must be designed to create a suitable light environment in a manner which is sympathetic to the architectural style and function of the building. One exploits the natural qualities of the glass, its various degrees of transparency and opacity, in order to enhance the site.

Another new influence in Australia which resulted from my own Crafts Board study tour of Germany in 1973, is the new school of architectural glass, where there is a concern to produce glass walls which are totally integrated with the fabric of the building.

The American studio movement is a third recent influence where there is an emphasis on individual

'Light of the World'

Erwin Eisch. Free blown glass form Studio movement

Paul Marioni. Modern American 'pop' influence

Maureen Cahill. Influence of melting and fusing

panels which are portable and independent of any architectural setting. They are artistic statements in glass, which reflect the personal preoccupations of their makers.

In blown glass we also inherited a basically British tradition. Blown glass was made there in factories to extraordinary standards of technical brilliance perhaps at the expense of the natural properties of glass. Again a rigid heirarchy governed factory production. At the top the artist designer who never blew glass but was expected to provide something different to sell. The inherent properties of glass were not important, but a technical problem to be overcome by the master craftsman on the factory floor, the head gaffer. As the best glassblower he interpreted the designer's drawings precisely, assisted by bit boys and gatherers who formed the rest of the heirarchy. No one person was able to carry out all stages of design and production and often could only specialise in one set of skills such as stems for glasses or paperweights.

So the stage of development in glass blowing which reached Australia in the 1900s was one of extraordinary technology which, like the stained glass of the period, seemed to have become divorced from the essential nature of the raw materials.

Early blown glass objects expressed the nature of hot metal, and what little decoration there was is well integrated with the form, and an expression of the plasticity of glass. Artistically a peak was reached in the 17th century when George Ravenscroft was determined to produce a crystal clear glass, and succeeded. He then expressed this transparency and sparkle in some of the most beautiful forms we have ever seen. Fidelity to form and clarity continued through until the 18th century search for elaboration began the serious divorce between the glass and the object produced.

The only sign of any return to the pure origins of the craft was in the 1895 design which Philip Webb made for William Morris at the James Powell factory. Fascinating, because it was this same group of Englishmen who also attempted to make a return to pure origins of stained glass. In both cases the reform did not become popular.

Social attitudes help to explain why movements in glass developed as they did. The Victorian memorial window placed in churches to honour relatives became a status symbol, was popular and respectable. In the same way good craftsmanship in blown glass was equated with perfect execution of difficult techniques. Perhaps the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851 encapsulates best the idea that a good glass object has weight and status. Great exhibitions seem to have produced the impetus for new technological developments and the Great Exhibition of Paris in 1889 saw the triumph of the French glass designer Galle. He further enhanced his reputation in the Exhibition of 1900. By 1895 he was joined by the American Louis Comfort Tiffany who exported many of his pieces to Samuel Bing's famous shop "La Maison de L'Art Nouveau." The emphasis was on individual technical virtuosity and much of this glass no longer looks like glass.

It took the Swedish designers working in small

workshops closely with their glassblowers during the 1920s and 1930s to break this stream of elaborate decoration and return us to the use of transparent glass and simple forms. Some independent designers in France such as Rousseau, Marinot and Daum also pioneered the way back in the 1920s.

Mass production, which came in after the development of the Sieman's Tank Furnace in the 1860s helped to simplify materials and design although it also simplified the imitation of expensive cut glass techniques by pressing.

Meanwhile in Australia a small bottle factory had been established in Sydney in 1813. This failed, but a second factory set up by Drug Houses of Australia in Melbourne in 1873 succeeded. Production of mass selling items like glasses and lampshades came next through subsidiary companies of overseas firms. These companies amalgamated first in 1916 and later in 1939 became A.C.I.

Another system of glass blowing was imported into Australia in 1974 when Sam Herman arrived to establish a glass studio at the Jam Factory in Adelaide. The studio glass blowing movement began just sixteen years ago with the experiments of Harvey Littleton at Toledo, U.S.A This was the first serious attempt to release glass blowing from the small factory production system. A furnace was developed which could be operated by one man and a studio teaching system grew alongside. Sam Herman was one of the first of Harvey Littleton's students, as was Bill Boysen who set up the first mobile glass tank in Australia for the Crafts Board in 1973.

This style of glass blowing, where the craftsman is independent and practises all aspects of production is yet another parallel with stained glass since Coventry Cathedral. We could call it fondly the "Do it Yourself Movement in Glass." Craftsmen who were unable to find satisfactory self-expression in the traditional system, broke away from the workshop method of glass production and began to forge a new pattern, where the individual controlled both design and production. So an alternative method of instruction to apprenticeship developed, as these individual craftsmen began teaching, first in their own studios and then as demand increased in art schools. Sam Herman was teaching at the Royal College of Art, London in 1965.

The third type of glass blowing we have in Australia is the type generally called scientific glass blowing, where Pyrex tubing is heated over a flame and blown into a small object. This work so often ignored, is capable of reaching great artistic heights. It has the major advantage of being inexpensive to set up.

The latest and fourth type of hot glass work was brought to the Sydney College of the Arts last year by Maureen Cahill. This method predates glass blowing in origin and achieves results by fusing and bending. It has undreamt of possibilities.

But in both hot and cold glass Australia inherited a Victorian tradition of fine technique and craftsmanship which seemed to have lost touch with the essential nature of the raw material, glass.

We gained nothing by importing also the hierarchical system of manufacture where no craftsman could

Ludwig Schaffrath. Modern German architectural style

incorporate any of his own ideas into the work, and designers without any real understanding of the nature and properties of glass worked in isolation.

Training in the glass crafts in Australia has always been limited, and apprenticeships almost unobtainable. Since the advent of the do-it-yourself movement of the 1970s we have produced a group of craftsmen working independently in all aspects of their craft, but their training is still inadequate.

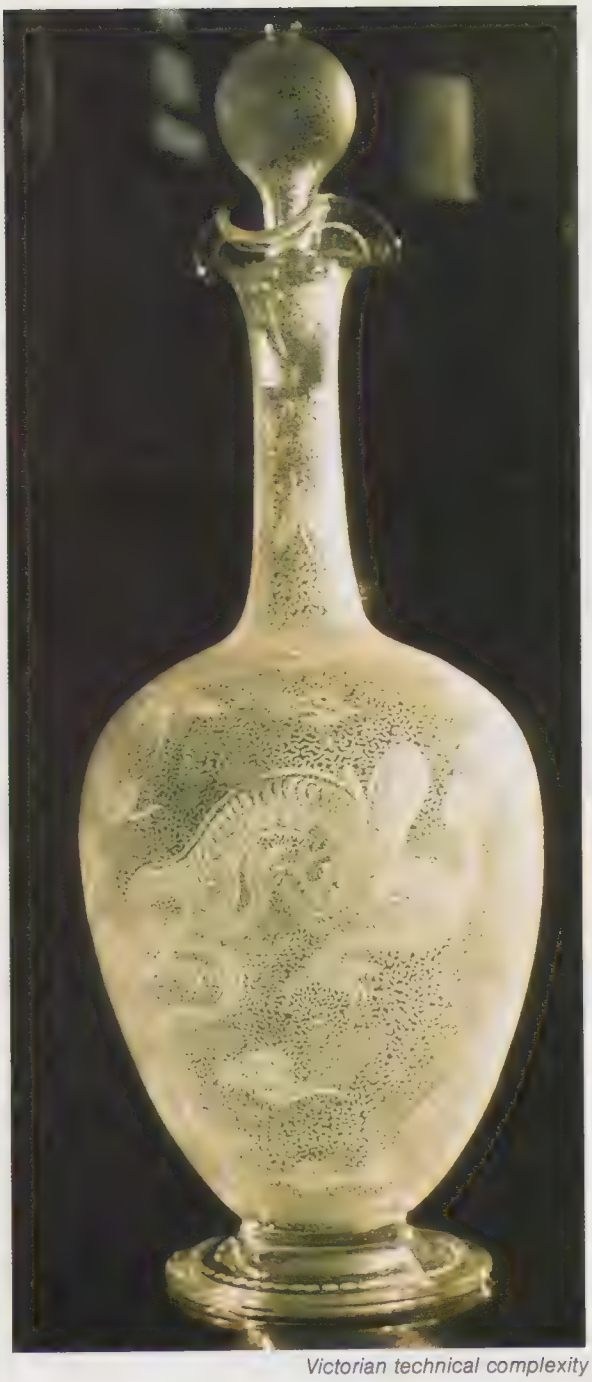
So far only introductory courses are available through various art schools and Departments of Further Education, useful only in raising consciousness of further commitment or as a leisure interest. There is a great need for some courses to be available at a greater depth. A little facility is easily acquired but real artist craftsmanship requires a longer apprenticeship.

Fully painted 'Picture type window' 18th C. Peterhouse College Church, Cambridge.

We are currently producing a flood of eager semi-trained practitioners who are working for a public more ignorant than themselves. We started with an historical background of poor design and we are seeing no improvement with the present revival. We need to take a hard look at both of the systems of production now operating and be honest in realising that they cannot bring us any glass art. We need a better system based on the prerequisites that our craftsmen should have a sound design background as well as good technique in their chosen areas of glass and that they should be working for people able to recognise a piece of good glass when they see it.

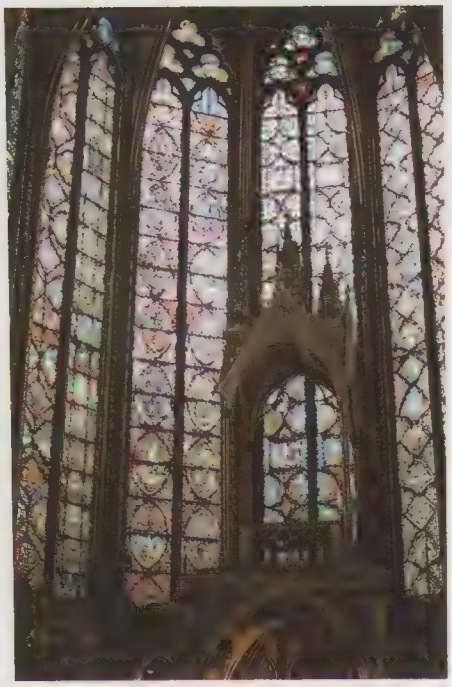
K. Koepping. Example of scientific glassblowing

Blown glass form echoes nature of material



Victorian technical complexity

Earliest style of leaded glass window



To achieve this we need a strong public relations campaign for the better understanding of glass in the community and we need to develop a strong educational system for glass craftsmen.

I see the essentials as being for flat glass, a training which is a combination of sound design principles, special skills like architectural drawing and rendering, so that we can work properly with architects and in

Mediaeval prototype glass in architectural setting. Sainte-Chapelle, Paris.

New Glass is Born

presentation of our ideas to clients, and a good range of technical skills which can be efficiently taught as specialist subjects by people who know the trade or are in a workshop trainee situation.

In blown glass there is a similar need for a sound design background, specialist studies in the technology of glass and glass-making which will give a good understanding of the nature and properties of the material being exploited, coupled with adequate practical instruction. Glass blowing is a skill akin to learning a musical instrument and needs to be practised daily for a minimum of two hours.

Glass craftsmen have problems other than training however. Glass blowers have to face the fact that the type of furnace developed for Harvey Littleton is now technologically outdated. It served a basic purpose in freeing glass from the factory, but it is grossly inefficient in heat loss and fuel costs and cannot be switched off without deterioration. Research needs to be done to develop a small furnace which is completely efficient for the one-man studio.

For cold glass workers the availability and variety of imported sheet glass often presents difficulties, as does the range in the types of lead came being produced in Australia. Large profits are being made by those who service the crafts, but there is little understanding of artistic needs.

And perhaps the most difficult problem to handle in this country is the peculiar quality of Australian light. For the development of an Australian glass style there needs to be an understanding of this light and of the properties of glasses used to exploit and control the situation. Many people working in glass are so bedazzled by the beauty of colour that they do not easily come to recognise that a small area of strong colour isolated in larger areas of pale tints will work most effectively under our conditions of strong light. The blue and red stereotype is really for the soft cold light of the northern hemisphere, and at best, only effective here when used in small slit windows facing south.

Cedar Prest

Condensed from the address given at the first National Glass Conference held in Sydney in early December 1978.

The Australian Crafts Enquiry of 1973-74 revealed that only 13 of the 1165 craftsmen who answered its questionnaire worked in glass.[1] Eight of these worked in cold glass and five in hot. Only 8% of craft shops and galleries had glass on their shelves, or walls. There were, at that time, no opportunities for tertiary art training in hot glass techniques available in Australia — and only a few in cold glass. It was in this context that a few pioneers like Leonard French, Les Kossatz, Bill Gleeson and Klaus Zimmer worked. They were all trained as painters, printmakers or sculptors, and in some cases, were highly successful in these fields turning only occasionally to glass when the rare opportunities arose. Most were attached, either as staff, students or friends to the Department of Fine Art of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. They were inspired by European masterpieces, Chartres, St. Chapelle, Aachen.

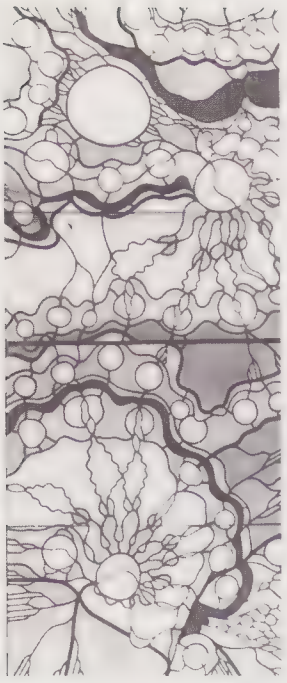
But, suddenly, a new generation of glass artists has emerged and is revolutionising glass activities in Australia.

1978 was the turning point. I would go so far as to locate the *exact* moment of rebirth — the glass event — exhibition — demonstration at the Old Melbourne Meatmarket in November 1978. This event was the final celebration of the Victorian Ministry for the Arts' "Craft — Victoria 78" — a year long programme of happenings which accentuated the magnitude and role of craft in the Australian community today. With the glass event the public had its first opportunity to witness the combined results of the most concerted glass programmes operating in Australian art schools today. It presented the tangible results of the first four years of serious and comprehensive glass training. The exhibition comprised hot and cold glass, together with demonstrations of these by master craftsmen, teachers and students.

Demonstrations of hot glass techniques were given by Eva Almeberg, visiting Swedish glassblower and an Arts Victoria Craftsman in Residence at the Preston Institute of Technology, by Denis O'Connor, Lecturer in Glassblowing at the Caulfield Institute of Technology and by Nick Mount, one of Australia's first full-time professional glassblowers. Flat glass designing, cutting, leading and finishing was demonstrated by Klaus Zimmer and three of his students — Maree Whinray, Julie Brandt and Dylan Thornton. The accompanying exhibition included finished work by the demonstrators and by students studying glass in the comprehensive courses now offered at Caulfield Institute of Technology.

The exhibition was entitled "Glass-Crafts at the Meatmarket — A final event of the arts — Victoria 78 Crafts Festival." The Old Melbourne Meatmarket, purchased by the Government of Victoria as a centre for the promotion and facilitation of the crafts, was a superb venue. An impressive Victorian building it still has many of the accoutrements, though fortunately not the atmosphere of its previous function.

Marjorie Johnson, Director of 'Arts Victoria '78', invited glass-art lecturers from Caulfield and Preston Institutes of Technology to arrange the exhibition and weekend of demonstrations. She was probably guided by the fact that Caulfield had already contributed to community awareness of glass-art in Victoria through



David Wright. 'Growth' leaded panel

the inclusion of glass in a number of mixed exhibitions mounted by that college during 1978, and by the work of Denis O'Connor who, using the mobile glass workshop funded by the Crafts Board of the Australia Council had conducted 11 hot glass demonstrations, in diverse Victorian centres, throughout the preceding year.

It is significant that the press release for this event described it as a weekend for the "lesser-known craft" — glass! The event was in fact a recognition of the new state of glass consciousness in this country and marked, in a concrete way, its *birthday*.

What then are the factors which have contributed to this concrete affirmation of a newly achieved state of glass in Australia? The most important element is obviously the educational programmes which have been developed both in the private sector and in the art schools. Sometimes, as at C.I.T., the art schools have themselves provided glass courses and opportunities for the general public. Eleven art schools across Australia now have glassblowing equipment, although not all have staff with the expertise to use it. The educational situation is best in Victoria which has six of the 11 glass studios. Here two art schools have already accredited flat glass as a major study for Post-Graduate Fine Art courses (R.M.I.T. and C.I.T.). At C.I.T. glass is included in B.A. courses in Fine Art and Ceramic Design, and a growing number of students are choosing to complete their degree with glass as a major.

It is at C.I.T. that glass has been most comprehensively established. The exacting craft of glass sculpture was taught by Michael Esson before he returned to London to complete his studies at the Royal College of the Arts. Hot glass was first set up by Nick Mount soon after his return from the United States and before he resumed full time studio practice. He gave valuable advice in planning for the new facilities and equipment. In 1977 Denis O'Connor, a Fine Art graduate from Sydney, who had completed a scholarship at Leonora Glass, Newcastle, joined the staff. He came to C.I.T. to teach glassblowing techniques, sandblasting and the fusing, slumping and diamond point engraving of glass. Flat glass is taught by Klaus Zimmer who first learnt glass at R.M.I.T. in the early sixties but subsequently had extensive training and experience in England and Europe. Four years of short courses in the design and manufacture of stained glass at C.I.T. have helped produce a generation of younger artists. At least seven of these have opened glass studios, others are working with architects and several are professional leadlighters working in industry, some have gone on to study glass with Patrick Reyntiens at the Central School of Art in London. Flat glass courses offered at C.I.T. include leadlighting, painting and staining in glass, and designing and cartooning for architectural settings. Students can also learn acid etching, engraving and hot and cold lamination techniques.

The Meatmarket show featured the fruits of the past four years at C.I.T.

The exhibition coincided with the release of an important report by Fiona Gavens of the Crafts Board on the state of glass in Australia.[2] Fortunately it served to belie the suggestion made here and there in the report, that little was being done to remedy the situation of only four years ago when glass-art hardly existed. The exhibition also seemed to be an early harbinger of the kind of co-operation between glass artists which should result from the formation of the first national organisation of glass artists in December, 1978.

There has been a sudden ground swell, the first results of recent educational efforts, the funding of individuals by the Crafts Board, and other agencies, and of the direct experiences of Australian glass-artists abroad. There is enormous excitement and anticipation in the air.

Fiona Gavens' report informs us that between 1973 and 1978 the Crafts Board has spent $200,000 on glass development. This includes 25 grants to individuals to set up studios and hold exhibitions, the sponsorship of three visiting glass craftsmen from overseas, the equipping of the mobile glass workshop and help with arrangements for two exhibitions — 'American Glass Now' and 'Swedish Glass'.

The new consciousness of glass-art has almost certainly arrived in the wake of a new attitude to the crafts generally. Glass craftsmen are fully aware of its potential for leisure activities — but there is a strong new professionalism as well while its popular acceptance was all too obvious at the Meatmarket, on November 25, 1978.

Jenny Zimmer

1. Crafts Enquiry, 1973-1974, conducted by the Australian Council for the Arts (now the Australian Council) on behalf of the Australian Government.
2. "Discussion Paper on the Glass Situation in Australia", compiled by Fiona Gavens, Projects Officer, Crafts Board of the Australia Council, 1978.

Glass-Crafts at the Meatmarket, 25-26th November 1978

Reflection & Retrospection

A recent exhibition at Melbourne's Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre is the first which has attempted to survey the development of modern stained-glass in Australia over a number of decades. The show included four artists whose careers and training differ widely but whose involvement in glass extends far back beyond the current, much needed, revival of interest in the art.

The exhibition was arranged by Alan McCulloch, Director of the Mornington gallery and long-time Melbourne art-critic. Glass exhibitions are perhaps the most difficult and risky undertaking one can imagine, and are thus avoided by many public galleries. The Mornington exhibition was a brave venture on the part of the gallery's director.

Excellent though it was in many respects, this exhibition completely lacked the verve and excitement of the "Meatmarket" and "Jam Factory" shows. The tentative newcomers, the brash amateurs were missing. The exhibition projected a quiet harmony achieved through selectivity, established quality and a bowing to tradition which is rare in the "new glass" field.

The mounting of this show also raised important issues over terminology. One of the participants, Alan Sumner, who has been professionally involved in making stained-glass since 1927, was particularly concerned to preserve the old distinctions between leadlighting and stained-glass. He wants to maintain a strict division between those artists who paint or stain glass in the traditional manner and those who may use more contemporary techniques of lamination, fusing, slumping, etching, or double glazing. He also implied a qualitative difference between the works of the artist who uses traditional techniques and those of the artist who resorts to other methods. Following a discussion on terminology he wrote to me

> "As a professional I will not stand by and see this very exacting profession watered down . . .
>
> Coloured glass cut and made into any sort of pattern, even with laminations, and leaded together becomes a leadlight and nothing more and should be titled as such.
>
> A different kind of attitude and involvement is required to produce a stained glass panel."[1]

Obviously the public is going to need some kind of explanation if it is to see traditional and contemporary glass in a useful perspective. Terms like "Glass Art" and "Flat Glass" help avoid qualitative discrimination against artists who do not choose to use the time-honoured traditional technique of "staining" glass. In fact much recent glass-art incorporates both the traditional techniques of painting and staining and the more recent methods of capturing contemporary imagery in glass. Just as a painter or sculptor may employ a variety of techniques, or invent new ones, in order to express his ideas so a glass artist now has the opportunity to expand his possible modes of expression. In Europe, even traditional and ancient buildings have been refitted with contemporary glass in which there has been no attempt at emulation of traditional techniques. I refer in particular to the beautiful cloister windows in Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen. These, made to designs by Ludwig Shaffrath, and executed in beautiful seeded and opalescent grey glass, are simply cut and leaded and yet it would be a gross insult to their artistic integrity to dismiss them as mere leadlights. It is, in the end, the quality and suitability of the total design concept that matters, not the particular technique. Excellence of technique is pre-supposed and excellence can be achieved in an exciting range of techniques nowadays. Some of the most interesting developments involve the use of hot glass procedures to make components for flat glass designs.

This debate over terminology was interesting and useful because it inadvertently highlighted the creatively adventurous qualities of the best of "new glass" against the overworked tediousness of too long and close an association with the conventional use of traditional techniques.

But, since this exhibition presented studio glass production representative of several decades, the spectator was able to reflect on these matters himself and this was, in a sense, the greatest value of this show. It gave an excellent opportunity for a retrospective view of the situation out of which the "new glass" has emerged — or has been reborn — as a gleaming infant.

In his catalogue introduction Alan McCulloch outlined the meagre history of stained-glass in Australia thus

> "Like most other art forms stained-glass design began in Australia as an English importation and was first seen in small, specially consecrated windows in churches. Then in Melbourne the demand for domestic leadlights, for the doors and windows of mansions built from the proceeds of the gold rush in Victoria, caused commercial firms such as Brooks-Robinson to enter this profitable field. In 1911 the Glasgow trained William Frater was appointed to work in the stained-glass department of this firm. Later the younger painter, Arnold Shore, joined him as an assistant. In 1915 Frater was seconded to the firm of E. L. Yencken & Co. They produced some excellent domestic work but had little opportunity of extending their interests into the more creative sphere of stained-glass for churches. These opportunities were reserved for younger artists, notably Alan Sumner who started as an assistant to Frater in 1927, and in 1940 became manager of the stained-glass department of Yenckens. Like Frater and Shore, Sumner was to be involved with the Bell School and the modern movement in Melbourne, as a painter. Later he was to apply the tenets of modern, semi-abstract painting to his work as an independent designer of stained-glass mainly for churches and for such works as his memorial window to Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe, glazed in Chapelle l'Ermitage, Neuchatel, Switzerland, in 1978. While modernist in approach, Sumner adopted the ancient methods of working from cartoons using pieces of pure, painted and stained-glass separated by leads supported by iron bars. Like John Ferguson he is one of the very few stained-glass designers in Australia using the methods of the great Gothic traditions. In the early 1960s new methods and

John Ferguson. St. Peter Design

materials were introduced to Australia by Leonard French in his preliminary studies for the coloured glass ceiling to the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Victoria. French used glass dalles, or bricks, imported from France and Belgium. Specially cut and faceted the heavy dalles were then fitted into a prefabricated wooden matrix which was, in turn, set into a reinforced concrete grid. Les Kossatz also used dalle-de-verre glass for his Stations of the Cross in the Chapel of Corpus Christi College, Clayton, and made much use of laminated glass in his series of windows for the Interdenominational Chapel, Monash University. Klaus Zimmer who began working with stained glass in Australia in 1960, and later had the opportunity of furthering his studies in Germany and England, is a glass designer of great versatility and taste who understands the art as profound decoration, and its various applications to present-day requirements. David Wright has been particularly successful in reviving the art of lead-lighting and giving it a new meaning in its application to houses and office buildings, and some interesting work has been done by Rimona Kedem notably in her fifteen stained-glass memorial windows for the Melbourne Synagogue in South Yarra."[2]

The Mornington exhibition included a range of works by John Ferguson, Alan Sumner, Klaus Zimmer and David Wright. John Ferguson (b. Melbourne, 1923) studied art at the Caulfield Institute of Technology from 1939 to 1941 and, after the war, at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. From 1947-1950 he was employed in the glass studios of Brooks-Robinson and in 1951 set up his own studio with Mr N. Papas. Since then they have produced innumerable commissions for churches, restaurants and private homes throughout Victoria and South Australia. For this exhibition Ferguson prepared panels of slab glass set in epoxy resin, and a series of simplified and abstracted leaded panels. The most impressive of these was a small panel depicting racial equality. The cartoons were in quite a different style from the exhibited works which were made for domestic architecture. They indicated a proficient traditional craftsman well trained and practised in the production of church commissions.

The senior glass-artist of the exhibition was Alan Sumner. (b. Melbourne, 1911). He studied at the Art School of the National Gallery of Victoria, at R.M.I.T. and at the George Bell School. He was later Director of the National Gallery of Victoria Art School between 1953 and 1962 and in 1979 was awarded the M.B.E. for services to art. His contribution to the Mornington show comprised mainly small scale working sketches which demonstrated the modernist style and the range of symbols to be found in his commissioned works. There were two glass panels on display. Close inspection, particularly of the back of the work, revealed an extremely heavy application of paint to the antique glass. The resultant effect is of the sombre luminosity often, though not always, thought appropriate for Church windows. Undoubtedly craftsmanlike in mode of manufacture the images are often awkward. The better piece was entitled "Bearers of Gifts."

Klaus Zimmer (b. Berlin, 1928) studied for a Diploma of Design in Berlin and for Diplomas of Painting, and later Printmaking, at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. It was there, during the early 60s that he became involved in stained glass. He has specialised in a number of techniques — and often combines them within a single work. Basically he is committed to the traditional painting and staining of glass but also uses lamination, acid etching and double glazing to achieve his images. Since the 1960's he has had extensive experience in glass studios abroad, in Cologne in 1974, in England in 1975, and in Hadamar and Linnich in 1979. In 1978 he became an Associate of the British Society of Master Glass Painters. He has had several one-man shows of flat-glass panels and is in charge of flat-glass studies at Caulfield Institute of Technology. He often works with the assistance of Dylan Thornton of Yencken Sandy Glass Industries. The major pieces of his work in this show were a four by two metre architectural panel designed for a modern foyer and a beautiful bay window. The bay window was made of delicately leaded pieces of painted and stained red and blue antique glass. The whole effect is of a shimmering screen of coloured light which is delicate, subtle and mysterious. The application of the stain to the glass reflects the artist's former training in painting. This is a very sophisticated piece. Zimmer also exhibited the full scale cartoons he learned to make under the direction of the famous European glass-artist Ludwig Shaffrath.

David Wright turned to glass after studying architecture at Melbourne University. He has been the recipient of several Crafts Board grants and has exhibited widely. He was included in the Craft '75 exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, in the Craft Australia Travelling Exhibition, 1978 and in 'The Living Space' exhibition of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1976. His most important commission was for the Melbourne Zoo in 1977. The artist specialises in the use of fused, leaded and laminated antique glass and has more recently experimented with slumped and drawn glass. The panels exhibited at Mornington bore his characteristically organic trademark. The floating, growing, gently exploding forms were elaborated with fine and sensitively handled decorative detail. Most pieces were made to fit into standard architectural situations but with one, entitled "Spores", the artist has allowed the freely expanding form to find its own boundaries — and framed its irregular shape with aluminium. This is a new departure for the artist and it will be interesting to see its sequels.

This retrospective view, afforded by the exhibition at Mornington, helped to underline the enormous development in the glass arts which has occurred in the last four or five years. This development was to be more accurately encountered at the Jam Factory, Adelaide, in May, 1979.

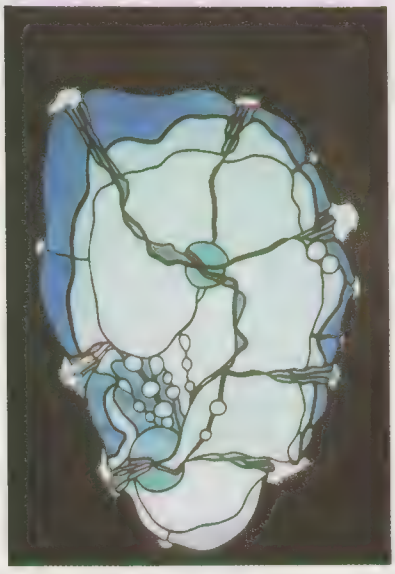
Jenny Zimmer

1. Alan Sumner, Letter of 19th March, 1979.
2. Alan McCulloch, Catalogue of the Glass Exhibition at the Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre, April, 1979.

Several Decades of Glass Reviewed at the Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre, April, 1979.

A. Sumner. Detail of stained glass panel

K. Zimmer. Installation



David Wright
'Spores'

John Ferguson
Leaded panel

New Developments

Les Blakebrough. Blue bottle with stopper

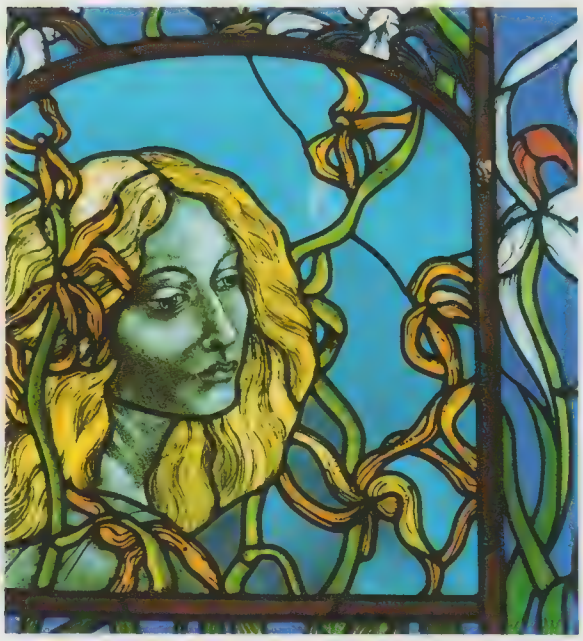
The "Aus-Glass" show at the Jam Factory Gallery, in May 1979 was a noteworthy event in the establishment of new-glass in Australia. The organisers, in particular Gallery director Mark Thompson, are to be congratulated on their foresight in choosing a thoroughly strategic moment to exhibit the extraordinary developments in glass over the last four or five years. The exhibition, by showing the work of some thirty-two artists from around Australia, was the culmination of such events and processes as the first national gathering of Australian glass artists in Dec. 1978, the recent sponsorship of glass art by national and state funding bodies, and the educational efforts of a number of prominent glass artists and some art schools.

The range and quality of new glass, which first began to be evident at the Old Melbourne Meatmarket show in Nov. 1978, was suddenly exposed to the public in a daringly comprehensive arrangement in the Jam Factory. The exhibition was also timely in that following, as it did, the Crafts Board "Discussion Paper on the Glass situation in Australia" (Fiona Gavens, 1978) it demonstrated the degree in which the more negative observations are being rectified.

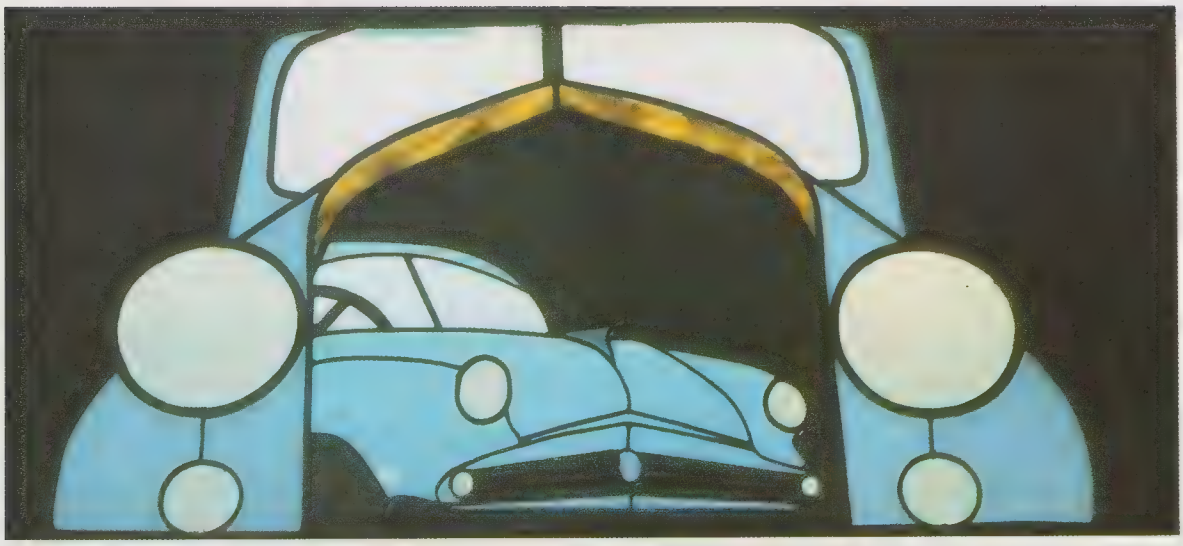
If I have a criticism of the Jam Factory show it would be that it could have been more selective. Some artists showed between seventeen and twenty-seven pieces. In the case of Les Blakebrough (27 pieces) there was a decided repetitiveness, unnecessary in this kind of show, Con Rhee (15 pieces) demonstrated incredible lapses in taste over his range and much of Sam Herman's contribution of seventeen "Glass Forms" would have been better omitted. Furthermore many of the prices asked for blown glass pieces were unrealistically high given the quality of the work and the prices of comparable studio glass overseas. Another superfluous exhibit was the old leather suitcase of objectionable miscellania contributed by Rob Knottenbelt which could only be interpreted as a publicity gesture.

David Saunders

Rod Sherlock



David Wright



Rodney Nolan

Most of the artists involved in the Jam Factory show were members of the new national organisation of glass artists, "Aus-Glass", established in Dec 1978. Warren Langley, a very impressive Sydney glass artist is its foundation president. This organisation has been formed to bring coherence to the current resurgence of glass art and to promote the further communication of information about glass throughout the entire country. The Jam Factory, Adelaide, was a fitting venue for this first "Aus-Glass' show because it has done much to establish glass art in Australia. It introduced hot glass production in 1975 and sponsored the American glass artist, Sam Herman, as artist-in-residence. This programme has been one of the single largest influences on the revival of hot glass in Australia. Sam Herman was represented in this show by some seventeen "Glass Forms", most of them rather ordinary and some tasteless. The work of his former students at the Jam Factory was probably a better indicator of his influence — people like Robert Knottenbelt, Tom Persson and John Walsh. Herman's No. 182 consisted of a lump of clear glass senselessly and formlessly slung over a pseudo art-deco construction.

Herman's New South Wales counterpart in the introduction of hot glass techniques, is Stephen Skillitzi who established his own glass studio in Sydney in 1972. He studied at the Brooklyn Museum Art School and the University of Massachusetts — taking out a Master of Fine Arts Degree in 1970. Since 1976 he has worked in South Australia producing his own distinctive glass sculptures and functional wares.

He exhibited three of his tall forms which are psychologically very uncomfortable, extenuated objects.

It was therefore with some relief that one turned to the exquisite craftsmanship and delicate beauty of Richard Clements' tiny bottles. They are unpretentious but very precious, opalescent and gem-like. They were the kind of object one coveted. Also of a high quality, but rather predictable were the numerous bottles with stoppers exhibited by Les Blakebrough. Though somewhat mass produced they are tasteful, craftsmanly and inoffensive. Several pieces were extremely felicitous like the beautiful blue glass bottle with stopper. Les Blakebrough made a great contribution to the ceramic arts in this country and, in 1976, turned to glass.

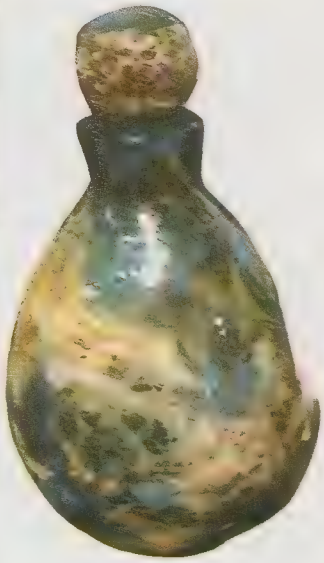
He has brought to this craft his exquisite sense of quality, style and elegance. I was greatly attracted to several vases by Warren Langley and by Nick Mount. These artists impressed me as being thoroughly in command of their craft and in possession of refinement of judgment. Both Langley and Mount have studied glass in the United States and in the United Kingdom and are taking a responsible attitude towards promoting quality in Australian glass production.

The European glass tradition was represented by artists like Stanislav Melis, Helmut Hiebl, Anne Ruth Dybka, Julio Santos and Edwin Mills. All of these artists trained in Europe and have brought fine skills of acid etching, diamond point engraving and glass sculpture to this country. Though thoroughly traditional the works of Hiebl, Dybka and Mills were some of the best, and most professional in the entire show.

Other hot glass exhibits by Con Rhee, Richard Kay, Julio Santos, John Walsh, Gerry King, Stanislav Melis and Tom Persson varied enormously in quality. There were some lovely pieces but there was also a profusion of lumpy, misshapen, amorphous, collapsing objects that could well have been omitted, or even recycled. The overall range showed the glaring necessity for a critical approach and a recognition of the special qualities of glass which make it susceptible to char ges of extreme bad taste.

Victorian artists made the most significant flat-glass contribution. A beautifully made laminated, etched and painted panel by Klaus Zimmer dominated the wall set aside for flat glass. It was surrounded by a large range of works by David Wright who continues to exploit organic forms. Rod Sherlock exhibited a finely painted Neo-Pre-Raphaelite style piece entitled "Girl with Orchids". South Australia was represented by Cedar Prest and by Rodney Nolan's "Reflections of a Dodge". New South Wales was represented by David Saunders.

Jenny Zimmer



Richard Clements

Installation — Jam Factory

Photography: Jenny Zimmer

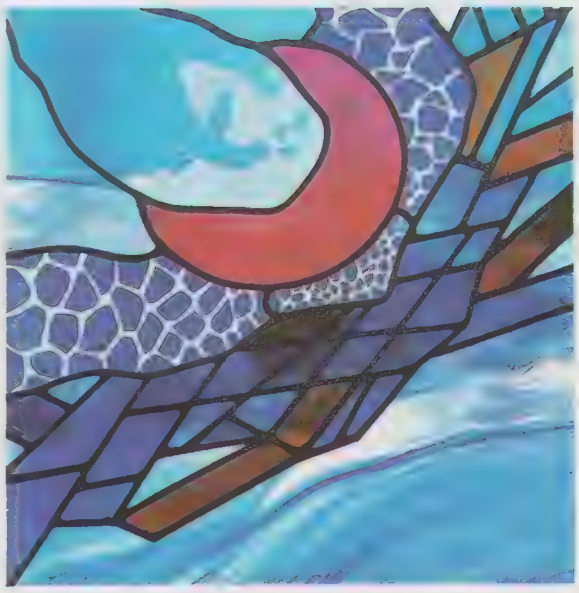
Gallery

Warren Langley

Warren Langley

For lovers of contemporary glass, the work of Sydney artist Warren Langley is a continual source of interest. Having studied widely in the United States and England, Warren acknowledges West Coast artist Paul Marioni as having the most influence on his own stained glass style. The glass is ferociously manipulated by sandblasting, acid etching, kilnwork and photolaminating. This treatment of the superficially delicate material is a means of contriving the artist's sometimes pictorial, often whimsical imagery.

For Warren, glass panels form the surfaces on which to express the crystallised images of his unconscious dreams and fantasies. The onlooker faces a piece in which the statement is all important although the sensuality of the glass is never minimalised. A serious commentary is often masked by humorous and incongruous imagery.



'Food For Thought' Detail

Warren is one of the few glass craftsmen to work in more than one aspect of this medium. It is predictable then, that in his blown glass there is a strong reflection of his flat glass beginnings. As he says: "Both in blown and flat glass, I am concerned with the imagery on or within the glass . . . in the blown glass it is the decoration which transcends the form in importance."

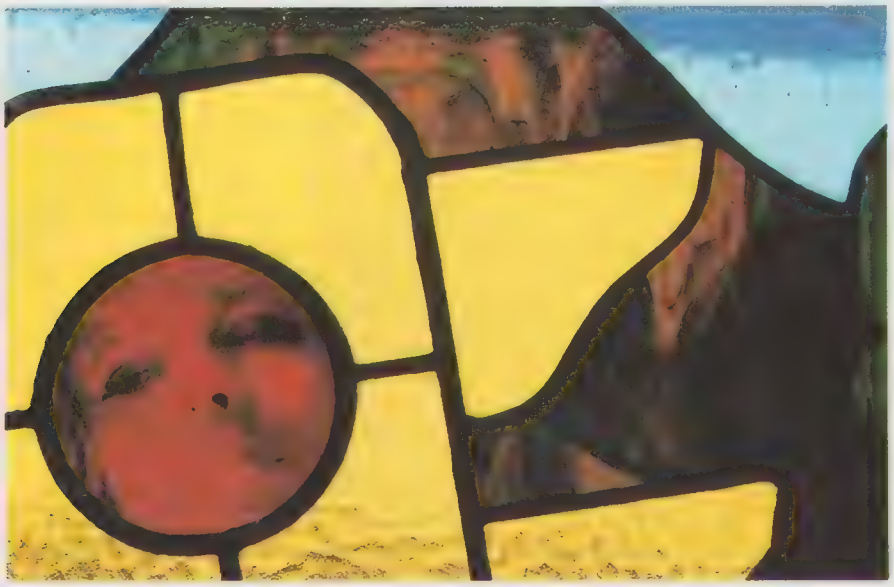
In recent work the blown glass merely provides the carrier shapes for his images and narratives. Warren Langley's approach does not embrace the functional or the narcissistic qualities of the glass, rather it stems from his fascination with the material, an affair with its sensual amorphous qualities.

Ian Bell

Ian Bell is a critic and collector from Canada who was recently in Australia.

Bowl 'Hollow-men Series' 20 cm h.

'Annie — don't go to the mountains'
Photography: Bruce Usher



Vase 'Kalahari Series' 23 cm h.
Photography: Mary Jenkins

Con Rhee

Con Rhee came to Australia originally from Holland and studied science at the University of Tasmania. He continued his studies at Harvard University where he gained his PhD in biology. His interest in the plant sciences is still important to him and he teaches botany two days each week at the Hobart College of Advanced Education, but now he comes down to Hobart from his glass blowing studio at Koonya, a bush area in south-eastern Tasmania, near Port Arthur.

Rhee's interest in glass began in 1971 when he studied with Dale Chuhuly, Jamie Carpenter and Fritz Dreisbach at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts. Later he established his own free-blown glass studio in Nova Scotia, Canada. He returned as a lecturer in botany to Tasmania in 1973 and had the opportunity to study free-blown glass again with Richard Marquis during his time at Hobart.

Now he regards himself more as a glass craftsman than a working scientist. His current work focuses on colour designs on fairly simple forms with surfaces suitable for decoration, plates, bowls, bottles, paperweights. The South Australian art gallery acquired two pieces from the recent "Aus-Glass Show" in Adelaide.

Rhee says: "I have a strong sense of what I call 'justification' about a piece of work. Does it have the right to exist? Is it strong enough so that it demands an existence? I don't want my work on the other hand to be highly improbable. I don't want it to be so involving of creative time that it demands existence merely because of the very unlikeliness of its existence. Finally, it must have some function beyond its ability to stimulate aesthetic sensibilities."

A.H.

Bottle 25 cm h. (collection SA Art Gallery)

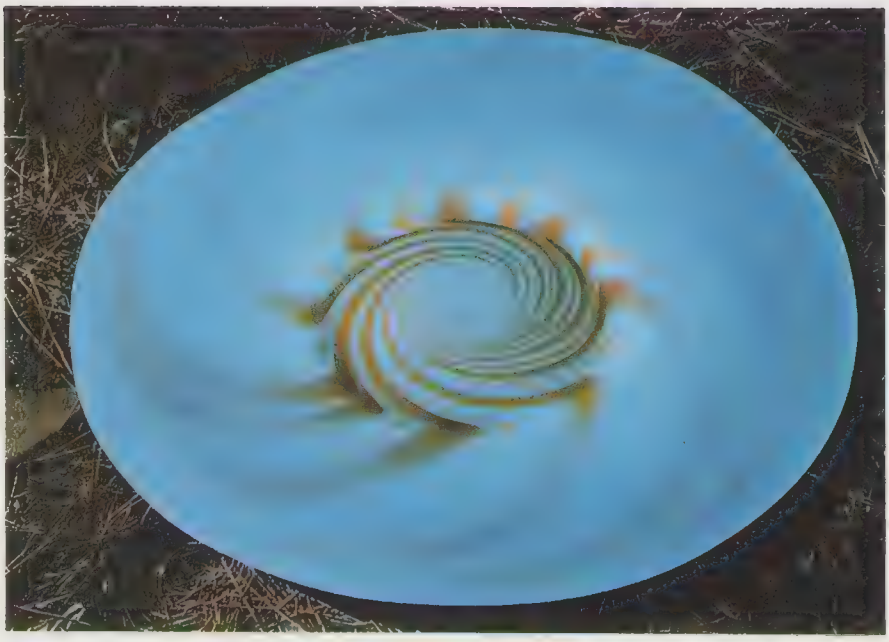


Plate 40 cm dia.

Bottle 16 cm h.

Peter Minson at Orrefors

Peter Minson working in the 'hot glass' workshop

Peter Minson, a Sydney glass blower was, this year, accepted into the Swedish Glass School at Orrefors, where the school adjoins the glass factory.

Most of Peter's working life has been spent working with glass. First of all in his father's scientific glass factory at Paddington.

From flame glass work, including decorative glass, Peter's interest widened to glass blowing. An area of his father's factory was adapted for a workshop.

After several years' experience, mostly self-taught, Peter started working for himself with the desire of starting his own glass blowing workshop.

Visiting designers and glass blowers gave Peter encouragement with his work. Goran Warff, Swedish glass designer, helped him with his ambition to obtain extra training and to obtain a place with the School.

Orrefors Glass Factory is situated close to Kosta Boda Glass Factory and Peter was given the opportunity to work with Goran and the glass master there.

Akrallskolan, the Glass School, is a vocational school; the courses, varying from two years, six months and four weeks, are classified as high school courses.

The school's aims are to train people in the skills of glass work, for employment in the glass factories, and to keep the craft alive.

Foreign students are accepted, when there are vacancies.

Classes are small, only 20 students accepted at one time.

This soon will be increased to 32 when new premises are completed nearby.

Students from the Swedish State School of Art combine with glass workers, some already highly skilled though not in all facets of glass work and wanting to extend their abilities in glass blowing, engraving and etching.

The courses include other processes; painting on glass, sand blasting and theory. Art periods can be spent doing stained glass work, pottery, painting or other work of the student's own choice. The courses are free of charge. Swedish students can obtain study grants, and, in some cases, foreign students can also receive grants.

Students needing accommodation can, for a small fee, stay in the boarding houses. These are typical Swedish redwood houses, some charmingly decorated and furnished by the students, and are shared communally.

Lunches, as in other schools, are provided and students cook for themselves at other times.

During the time of Peter's stay, nationalities and ages of students were varied. Men and women from 16 to 39 years, from Sweden, Iceland, Norway and America were attending the school.

One student, Jerry Heintze, had been a glass blower since leaving school, in Sweden and America. He was obtaining extra training whilst waiting for acceptance for emigration to Australia, hoping to work in the "Jam Factory" in Adelaide, South Australia.

At the school, students who have never worked with glass before train with practised glass blowers. All must learn to perfection each step in the making of basic pieces, from which anything can be made. All practical instruction is given in Swedish with interpreters available among the students when needed.

Interest in this unique glass school is increasing and acceptance may become difficult. But for those interested, applications can be made to — Rolf Brandstrom (Rektor), "Akrallskolan", 380 40 Orrefors, Mybro, Sweden.

Mary Jenkins

Typical Swedish houses now used for student accommodation

Bowl and Plate. Exercise pieces made during the early weeks at the School.

Photography: Mary Jenkins

Design Section: Quilts
Elizabeth Kruger

Elizabeth Kruger (23), whose hand stitched traditional and original quilts drew almost 10,000 people into the Crafts Council gallery earlier this year, is far removed from the vision of the little seamstress stitching away at her craft although she certainly does spend hours at her work. She also spends hours with her horses, currently Copperfield, an ex racer who demands a fair share of her attention. A tall athletic girl who loves the country and one of whose dreams is to live on a property far from the cities, Elizabeth is passionately fond of horses and always has been — the stable at the bottom of her parent's garden is testimony to a series of ponies belonging to Elizabeth and her brothers during their Canberra childhood. Her abiding interest is the precise challenge of dressage work —which is probably not so far removed from the discipline of exquisite needlework.

Elizabeth's work is exquisite. Her normal sewing is at 12 stitches to the inch and when she sews with gossamer thread on pure silk it is even finer.

Born in Noumea, New Caledonia, she came to Canberra as a small child and was educated there, attending in due course the National Art School. She regards this as a period of non-training and left after a year.

Her first attempt to put her sewing and artistic ability together was a financial disaster. She produced hand embroidered scarves for a Canberra shop, working from her own original ideas, and stitching at exotic landscapes adorned with animal figures.

"I lost drastically," she recalls. "Not surprisingly when you consider the work involved."

Her interest in quilts began when she sewed one as a farewell gift for a friend going overseas. Then she made one for herself and found the complicated piecing together and the development of colour schemes very pleasing although enormously time consuming. For the next three years she worked consistently at the quilts producing 10 of them and two quilted waistcoats for her first exhibition held at the Crafts Council of the A.C.T.'s gallery in 1978.

Because she had taught herself from books Elizabeth Kruger's stylistic development followed a progression from the pursuit of great technical skills inherent in some of the traditional American quilt patterns such as her Double Wedding Ring which contains 2,800 pieces, to a much freer approach to quiltmaking where the emphasis is on the shadowy effects of white on white or the delicacy of Pre-Raphaelite designs like her L'Oiseau de Soie where a silken dove with folded wings is surrounded by delicate pastel flowers.

"It is interesting that I began with so much involvement and intricacy, with nostalgic crazy quilts in velvet and silk and with very traditional patterns and now my designs are more simple with an almost total lack of colour — as though I am reproducing the pencil sketch — which is how it all begins."

The first exhibition in Canberra attracted a great deal of attention, particularly from the National Gallery who sought to purchase the Double Wedding Ring and Chinese silk pale yellow vest made in the 18th century style and decorated with the traditional English folk poem of Lord Lovell and Lady Nancy. These star crossed lovers were separated in life and re-united in death and from their twin graves sprang a rose and a briar which joined themselves forever in a lover's knot. On Elizabeth's waistcoat the whole story is delicately outlined in backstitch, the horses, the lovers, the castle, the entwined flowers. Stitched in silk on silk and very lightly raised from the back to give a third dimension to the figures, the work is brilliantly conceived and will no doubt become an heirloom. It is not in the National Gallery but has been purchased privately.

Other works include "Prairie Star", a traditional handsewn patchwork quilt consisting of 3,300 pieces, "Log Cabin", an all over design known as "straight furroo" by American pioneers and generally sewn in scraps of wool for warmth although Elizabeth used some Chinese red satin and "Bid's Star" named for a friend who was very encouraging. "Bid's Star" is not quilted but intended for a summer bedcover. The long fringes on three sides and the crochet lace along the pillow edge are all original.

One of the simplest and loveliest of the quilts is "Virgin Quilt", an all white cotton quilt decorated with flowers outlined in stitching. The quilt is very plain but has a quality of originality which takes it away from the American based designs. The flowers are all stitched in the traditional manner but have been taken from Elizabeth's mother's drawings of carnations, sunflowers, tulips, hibiscus blossoms, frangipanni, roses and waratahs. It is a mixture of Australiana and traditional daisies and briar roses of English style quilts.

"Summer Fruits", one of the most recent quilts has parrots, surrounded by flowers and fruits. This is another breakaway from tradition which is not quite as successful as the quilts with pale pastel tones.

The making of a quilt takes approximately three months and requires a commitment of some 200 hours of stitching broken down into six hour days. More than six hours is not really possible because the needlework is too tiring for the hands. Before the actual handwork begins the design must have been drawn and the pattern marked on the top of the quilt or if it is pieced, then the piecing must have been completed in patches or squares. The article is then mounted on a quilting frame and the three layers of top, wadding and lining sewn together. After the quilting the work is taken out of the frame and the edges are finished off by binding or oversewing.

"It really is a tedious process and there is always a very exciting feeling about seeing a finished quilt on a bed once it has been released from the tautness of the frame and the parts that have been left unquilted puff up. The best time to see this effect is at dusk when the natural light is very soft and the lines of sewing appear as furrows in a ploughed field."

Elizabeth Kruger would have been a great success in any pioneer society. Not only is she a very capable quilter, considered important in the days before blankets, but she has a knack for turning her hand to many of the finer arts of the home. She likes smocking, and all the various complications of very skilful dressmaking, although she is not particularly interested in wearing the clothes she makes. At one time she was very interested in cake decorating and

Elizabeth Kruger and 'Little Fella'

Indiana Puzzle
195 cm x 256 cm
Machine sewn, hand tufted.

Log Cabin 231 cm x 287 cm
Handsewn, quilted,
1,700 pieces.

can still produce grand concoctions for family celebrations. At her first exhibition in Canberra her home made pate was served but the piece de resistance at both Canberra and Sydney openings were Elizabeth's home made chocolates, quite as elegant as the products of the most sophisticated chocolate boutique.

She does not see herself as particularly domesticated despite all her accomplishments. Although she is never short of ideas for her sewing and her successful Sydney exhibition, which was virtually a sell-out, has inspired her to begin another series, she wonders if at some time she will not want to give up working with her needle. If that day comes she may turn to writing. She already writes poems and short stories and has contemplated writing a book about quilting as she found it so difficult herself to find her way through the various descriptions of the craft. But she seems more likely to turn to fantasy.

In the catalogue produced for the Sydney exhibition she wrote: "My other interests — namely fairy stories and magical fantasy poetry — are incorporated into quilting. William Morris' stories in particular fascinate me and so does the whole Pre-Raphaelite notion of craft and art . . ."

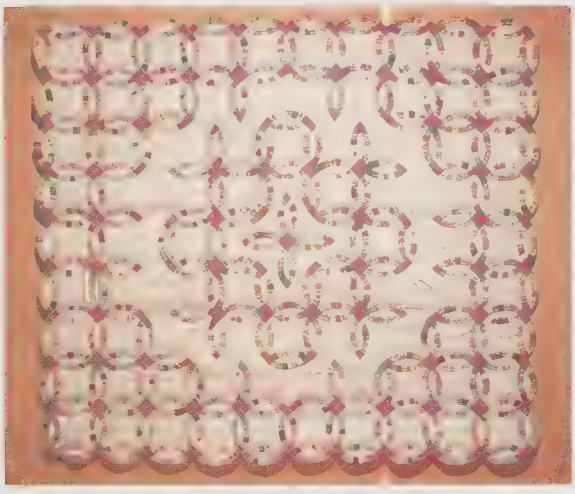
Hopefully she will continue to develop her fantasies into her Australian quilts, but even if she does not she will have the satisfaction of knowing that the pieces she has made will have a life span of at least 100 years and that are if they are protected by museums may last for many centuries, providing a link with the future as real as that which we are able to feel when we look at the hand-stitching on a surviving medieval quilt.

April Hersey

Detail of Double Wedding Ring. Handsewn, quilted and tufted, 2,800 pieces.

Detail of Mother's Star machine sewn, hand tufted.

Detail of Summer Fruits Handsewn and quilted.



Praire Star 159 cm x 198 cm Handsewn patchwork. 3,300 pieces.

Double Wedding Ring 193 cm x 218 cm

Detail of Crazy Quilt

Detail of Log Cabin

Silk Vest illustrating the poem 'Lord Lovel and Lady Nancy'

Photography: John Delacour

Early American

There is now a tremendous revival of interest in antique American quilts all over the world. While the actual "craft" of quilt making was imported to the United States, the great development of quilt design — especially the type which has repetitive figures building to an overall effect — was and is distinctly American. Museums and private collectors search for fine examples of the old quilts. Once regarded as "pretty" utilitarian articles of warmth, the quilts are now valued as unique expressions of the women of the time — executed with painstaking precision and with a colour sense only recently ordained as art.

Countless millions of quilts were made in the 1800's. It has been estimated that three quarters of all beds in America in the period 1870-80 were covered with quilts! But 1890-1900 saw a decline in production. The Victorian era brought with it new tastes in furnishings and around 1885 Sears Roebuck began to market the "blanket" which became far more fashionable to have on the bed than a piece of mother's handwork!

In America's early days, necessity demanded that a large part of a pioneer woman's time be given to needlework. The making of clothing and bedding was an integral part of every woman's life from her earliest years. Spinning, weaving and patching scraps into fabric pieces were squeezed into every spare moment. Quilt making actually began as a salvage art. But, even after cloth was easier to come by, quilts remained as a visual expression of the feminine virtues of thrift, industry and pride in the home that were so valued in the early years of American growth.

The first settlers were not able to bring decorative items to their new land — cargo space was too precious — so their homes were devoid of decoration. It is understandable that women found the energy to turn the design of a very necessary piece of bedding into a work of beauty. It became a tradition which flourished in the most incredible way.

By the mid-19th century, inexpensive locally produced fabrics, in countless patterns and colours, were available to the quilt maker. No longer dependent upon leftover remnants, the quilt maker could design with fabrics purchased especially for the project. The painstaking effort required to put together the thousands of pieces was a welcome task to the pioneer. It furnished a needed relief from the real labour of family maintenance and it served as a unique creative outlet. Through quilts women expressed feelings for colour, form and line, and their responses to the American experience.

A contributing factor to the flourishing output of quilts in the 19th century was the fact that most quilting was done collectively in the form of "Quilting Bees". The women of the neighbourhood would gather together around a quilting frame (like a large table) and quilt the three layers together — underside, stuffing and top. This working bee provided an excellent opportunity for socialising — a much needed pastime for the isolated homesteaders.

There was tremendous pride in their work. It is not uncommon to see stitching averaging no more than one-sixteenth of an inch. Considering this was often accomplished on winter evenings with only candlelight or kerosene lamps for lighting, it only adds to the fascination of pioneer quilts.

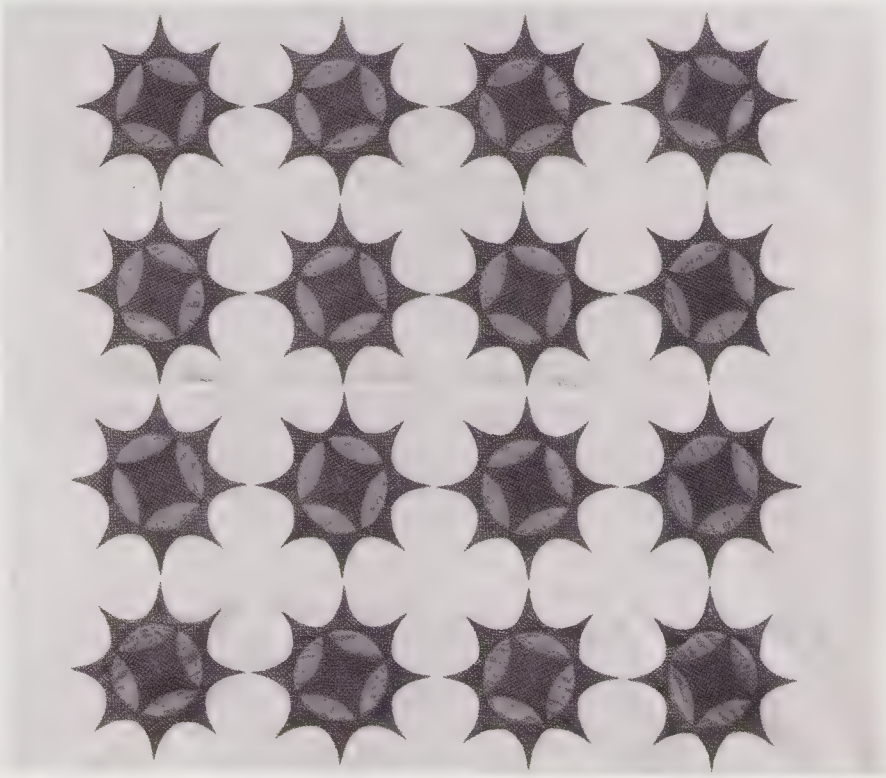
Magazines of the day carried the most popular quilt patterns. Quilts were judged along with other prized products of family industry at the Regional Fairs, and of course, women swapped and talked about patterns amongst themselves. The multitude of patterns gives some idea as to the wealth of expression and imagination behind them. The names in themselves offer a sketch of the social, political and religious concerns of the times . . . Drunkards Path, Irish Chain, Jacob's Ladder, Democrat Rose, Courthouse Steps, Duck's Foot in the Mud, Star of Bethlehem . . .

One of the most traditional graphic patterns was the log cabin. This pattern is made of hundreds of thin strips of fabric arranged in a box like pattern growing from a small central square. By arranging the light and dark strips in different ways, a quilter might produce a stunning variety of overall effects.

Often the technique of applique was used to produce a best "show" quilt — only to be used on special occasions Sometimes a group of women would collaborate on a quilt to commemorate a special occasion Each woman would make a square and sign it. Then all the squares would be joined and they would quilt it down when they gathered for a bee.

The Victorian era saw a new type of quilt emerge — the crazy. Usually made of silks, velvets and satins they were used as "parlour throws" in the ornate Victorian environment. The crazy quilt was made up of randomly placed shapes — held down with lavish embroidery. At the same time the traditional cotton quilts for use on beds were replaced by blankets.

Hand stitched quilt
2.80 m x 2.80 m 1880
Massachussetts



It was about the same period that the Amish people started to make their quilts. The Amish are a semi-religious sect who did not and still do not live by "modern" standards. Extremely conservative in both their life style and dress, they produced a completely individual style of quilt always made from rich solid colours. These enormously vibrant quilts evoked a fascination which drew attention to quilts as a whole.

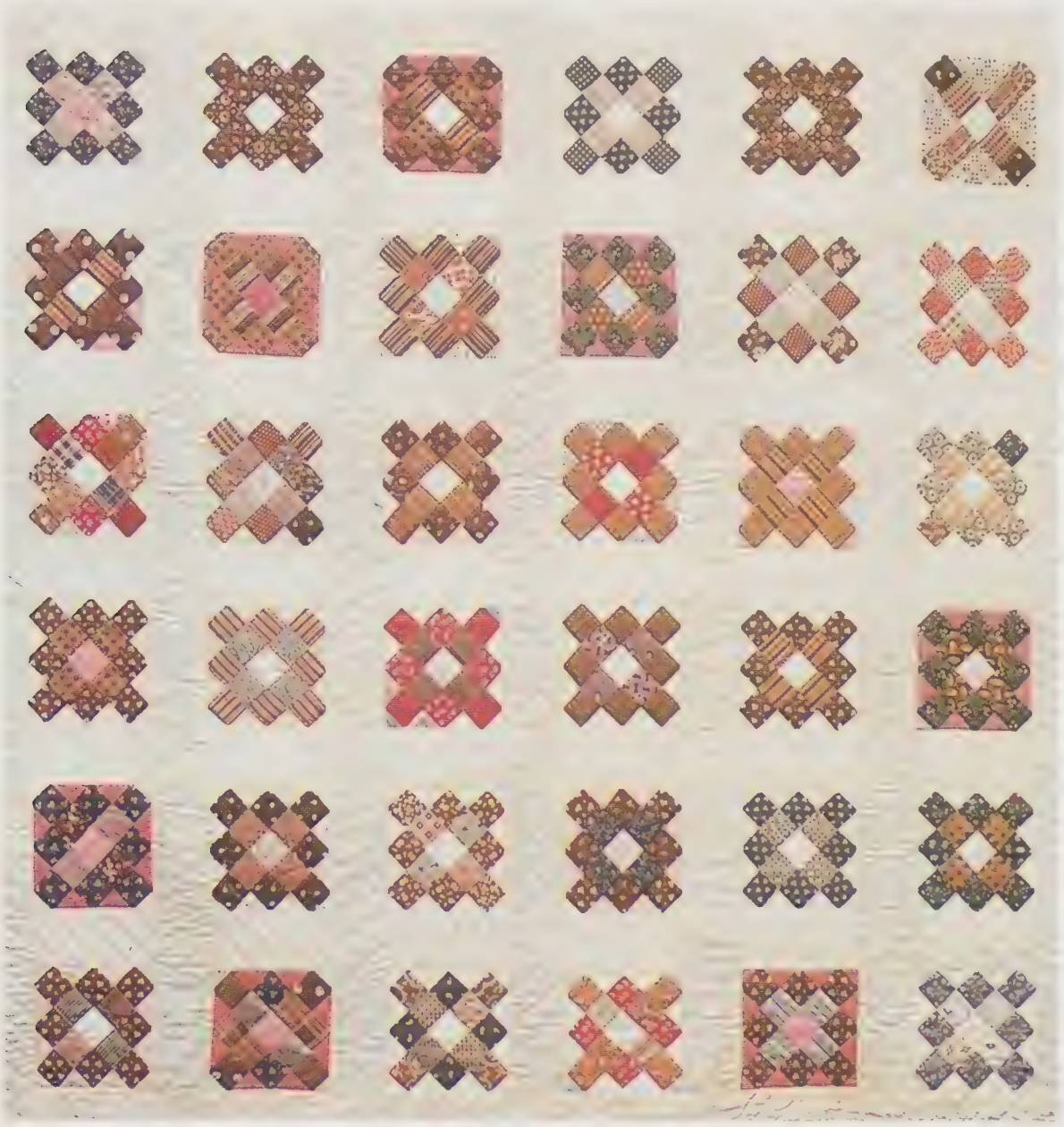
Many Amish quilts were included in the 1971 Whitney Museum exhibition "Abstract Design in American Quilts". It was this exhibition that instantly legitimised quilts as an art form. Quilts are likened to paintings from modern artists such as Joseph Albers, Frank Stella, Victor Vasarely and Andy Warhol.

A phenomenal variety of American patchwork remains today, ranging from simple squares to the most intricate patterns containing thousands of pieces. Most of those that have survived are the product of an easier life. As conditions improved, with goods and leisure time becoming more abundant, the emphasis shifted toward more painstaking "craftswomanship" and the creation of a beautiful result for its own sake. These quilts have survived because they were kept with the same love with which they were created.

Joanne Lane

Joanne Lane is an Australian collector who has held five exhibitions of her antique quilts since 1975 showing at the South Yarra Galleries, Melbourne and at the Queen Street Galleries, Sydney.

Photography: Oliver Strewe
Joanne Lane



Le Moyne Star 1880

Amish Quilt 1910

Crazy Quilt 1890. Velvets with oil paints.

Oakleaf applique Pennsylvania 1860

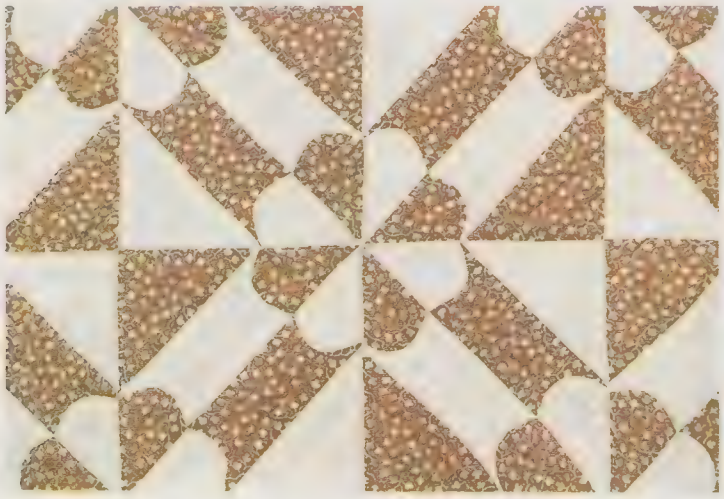
Log Cabin Ohio 1880

Wheel of Fortune New York 1880

Chintz 1810 New York

Pineapple Log Cabin New York 1882
Signed and dated in centre.

Detail of Le Moyne Star



Tattoo

Cobra design by Thompson

In Cook's journal for his first voyage, dated July 1769, he speaks of the natives bearing marks that they refer to as "tattow". Later, in 1771, Bougainville published his *Voyage au Tour du Monde* and in it wrote of "tatauo" as a practice among the natives of the South Seas. The current term "tattoo" is an evolution of those first transcriptions from the Tahitian language. Until the time of Cook and Bougainville, and the explorations of the eighteenth century, any permanent marking of the skin effected by a similar principle, had been generally referred to as "pricking". In their recent history however, the Europeans had nothing in that practice that had the aesthetic quality or cultural or religious significance of what they saw in the South Seas. Pricking is spoken of through the classics by Herodotus, Virgil, Caesar, Cicero, Seneca and others; archaeologists verify its practice in all parts of the world — Asia, Europe, the Pacific and the American continents. Marco Polo reported it among the menfolk of Yunnan in the thirteenth century; Hawkins was fascinated by the markings of the Florida Indians in the sixteenth century; and Sagard, in the seventeenth century, described the designs of the Huron Indians of north-west Canada. The earliest written evidence for tattooing however, is from the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament, where it is condemned and discouraged because of its association with a cult of the dead. Earliest archaeological evidence is found in designs on Egyptian mummies dating from the XI dynasty, during the second millenium.

In its simplest explanation, a tattoo is the result of deliberate introduction of an insoluble and thus indelible pigment into the corium, or dermal area of the skin, the area just beneath the surface. All methods of tattooing have had a similar basic mechanical principle: the use of a sharp needle-like tool, the tip of which carries the selected dye or pigment. The ancient Egyptians are said to have used solid gold needles; the Japanese worked with sticks of ivory; the Burmese, bamboos up to two feet in length. The South Sea Islanders continue a tradition of using comb-like tips made from either bone or sea-shell that are set into long rods that are tapped in a chisel-like manner. An exception to this general method, is that of the Greenland Eskimos, where the art is accomplished by drawing a soot covered thread under the skin.

Tatooing has had a strange history and has been practised in all quarters of society. Among prisoners, in all parts of the world — perhaps first as idle distraction — it has been sophisticated into a complex system of symbols that embarrass or baffle the criminologists, but which are code and cipher of hierarchy within the community of inmates themselves. As late as 1876, the British Army tattooed the letters B.C. and D. on the wrists of soldiers for bad conduct or desertion. Slaves in many ages have been marked by their masters: the subdued of Virgil's Rome bore tattoos as did the forced labour in the camps of World War II's Europe. In 787 the Catholic Church banned tattooing, but despite that ruling, the practice was

The most heavily tattooed man in Australia. It all began with a snake on the left bicep fifteen years ago. Since then six artists have worked on this man's body; the larger designs and the bulk of the background and filling have been done by Chris Webb and Peter Davis. Close examination shows many what would otherwise be unrelated motifs, that assume a place in a whole because of the effect of the fine background pattern. This filling produces a tapestry feeling that was first the hallmark of the Burmese tradition. The Japanese will work in a whole design sense, but the figures, their colour and distribution will reflect a complete plan and unity to the work. Here we see the fusion of several traditions: Indian heads, serpents, panthers, and eagles, alongside spiderwebs, dragons and chains against a backdrop of Japanese peonies and English roses. There is even geometric work reflecting a coloured variation on South Seas designs.

Crafts as a Livelihood Afghanistan

It might seem pointless to narrate the life history of one single craftsman, but I would argue that Haji Abdul Raouf's life, his aspirations, hopes, disappointments and his struggle are typical of many craftsmen who find it increasingly difficult to survive on their craft without assistance and guidance from government or private organisations, mainly in securing permanent outlets for their products.

Cheaper industrial cottons take away the market for ordinary goods and imported items often replace indigenous craft items, the production of which requires a long and complicated work process.

Another problem many craftsmen are confronted with, is the lack of capital, which would enable them to buy raw materials in large quantities when they are plentiful and cheap. To add to the misery, all the weavers surveyed tended to have large families, some members of which are constantly sick due to malnutrition and deficiencies of one kind or another. Thus sickness or poor health puts a serious strain on an already tight budget.

Most weavers are loners, if not outcasts. Craft guilds, formerly very strong and powerful organisations in Central Asia representing the views, interests and

A group of Uzbek men in traditional attire.

Financially strong customers prefer imported luxury goods, since they carry an air of status and prestige, although they are often unfunctional and of inferior quality.

Haji Abdul Raouf and many of his colleagues have tried to make adjustments to new trends and tastes, such as changes in design and cheaper quality in order to remain competitive and viable in the price-game. In an effort to keep production costs down, Haji Abdul Raouf went as far as adopting chemical dyes, thus trying to skip the tedious and labour-intensive process of preparing dyestuff from roots and blossoms. "I do not like to bastardise my craft. It hurts having to change too much. With each change, I somehow have to give away part of myself, but what choices do I have? My family needs to eat." He said this in a rather bitter and resigned tone. He is obviously tired of fighting and struggling for a mere subsistence.

prospects of the craftsmen and regulating the training of apprentices, are a thing of the past and no substitute has emerged.

Some governments have recognised the need to reorganise their craftsmen into interest groups, to support them materially and emotionally and to secure markets for their products. They are further aware that traditional techniques and designs are on the verge of dying out without assistance from appropriate bodies. In some countries craft groups are important training centres for apprentices. Such craft organisations also serve as clearing houses, to discuss new trends, new developments and adaptions of traditional techniques and as checkpoints for quality control. In other words, they serve as perpetuators of part of the national heritage. Afghanistan has a long way to go in this respect!

The whole spectrum of problems regarding the securing of capital, raw material, marketing and social

pressure is brought to light in the life history of this particular Uzbek silk-weaver.

Haji Abdul Raouf, 58-year-old silk-weaver, lives on the outskirts of a market town in the arid region of Afghan Turkestan.

His home consists of a walled compound divided into an outer area containing his workshop adjacent to the guest house for male visitors, which also serves as bedroom for his older sons. As in all Islamic societies, male spaces are segregated from spaces assigned to women, therefore a wooden gate separates this "male" domain from the female quarters. In this inner "female" family compound Haji Abdul Raouf keeps a cow and two sheep. A small room in this section houses his collection of wooden printing blocks which he inherited from his uncle. Mohammad Amin, Haji Abdul Raouf's father and his uncle Haji Kader owned a flourishing silk-weaving enterprise in Katta Qurghan, northwest of Samarkand, now part of the Uzbek Soviet Republic. His uncle was in charge of the production and his father of the marketing and sales. They produced a wide range of silk cloth decorated with various techniques, among them the famous Uzbek *ikats*. Their textiles were mainly for local use, but some choice items were also sold in other areas of Turkestan and Afghanistan.

In 1920 Bukhara fell into the hands of the Russian communists, and in 1924 the Republic of Uzbekistan was proclaimed. When the collectivisation efforts of the Russian authorities became a serious threat to private enterprise, Mohammad Amin left for Afghanistan with his wife and two of their three sons. Haji Abdul Raouf was 8 years old at that time. In a hotel-fire in Kabul, the family lost everything they managed to bring out of Uzbekistan with the exception of a few pieces of silk cloth that were in storage at the house of a friend. After this cloth was sold to pay for their immediate costs of living, the father of Haji Abdul Raouf decided to start a new life in India, where the textile trade was flourishing. After arriving in India, Haji Abdul Raouf's brother got sick and died shortly afterwards in Poona near Bombay. The family interpreted this death as an ill omen and made preparations to migrate to Saudi Arabia. They all performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and during this time made a living by selling textiles brought from India. At the end of the first year in Arabia, the boy's mother died and a year later also his father passed away.

At the age of 13, Haji Abdul Raouf found himself alone in a foreign country. He made a living by peddling all kinds of small goods from village to village.

In the meantime his uncle, Haji Kader, had migrated to Afghanistan with his wife, his daughter and the third brother of Haji Abdul Raouf. He established a new silk workshop in the Afghan city of Herat. In the hope of locating his nephew and bringing him back to Afghanistan, he entrusted four successive letters to pilgrims bound for Mecca.

Haji Abdul Raouf decided to ignore the letters, since he knew nobody in Afghanistan and felt quite comfortable in Saudi Arabia. In 1935 he was forced to leave Arabia after the intervention of the Afghan Embassy and was made to join a group of Afghan pilgrims on their way home. In Karachi he managed to escape their false company. He visited the grave of his brother in Poona before heading for Herat. Reunited with his uncle, he served as apprentice, and in 1938, at the age of 17, married the daughter of Haji Kader. The uncle's business flourished. At that time he employed 22 weavers and owned 24 looms. The uncle, a good Sunni Muslim, with a strong Uzbek cultural identity, worried to see his nephews in the company of Shi'ite neighbours and Jews, daily speaking Persian and gradually forgetting Uzbaki, their native language. "First they forget their language and culture, then they forget their religion to become Shi'ites". In view of these worries, the uncle decided to abandon his thriving business and move to Northern Afghanistan which was inhabited by large groups of Turkic-speakers such as Uzbeks and Turkmen, who cherished their traditional cultural heritage. In 28 caravan-stages they reached Maymana, a large Turkic centre. They stayed there for two years, but a lack of mulberry leaves, needed to raise silk-worms, forced them to move on to Aqcha. Here Haji Kader reconstructed the design of the wide looms formerly used in Katta Qurghan from his memory and had it made by a local carpenter.

They mainly produced white silk cloth which they decorated by tie dying or printing techniques. Until 1953 they also produced the highly treasured *ikat*. All their products were aimed at a local clientele of Uzbeks and Turkmen. Once a year some Pashtun vendors from Southern Afghanistan would come to buy a selection of goods to sell in their native provinces. In 1958 their workshop consisted of 6 wide looms and occupied 8 fulltime workers. Haji Kader owned a shop in the local bazaar which served as main outlet for their textiles. To make a better living, Haji Kader periodically undertook selling trips to Pakistan, where he could get better prices for his goods. In a last attempt to modernise his workshop, Haji Kader went to Pakistan in 1957. He was hoping to buy machinery and parts to establish a mechanised weaving factory. He stayed away for eight months and during that time acquired all kinds of loom parts of Japanese origin and a large amount of high quality Italian silk thread. Three months after his return to Aqcha he passed away at the age of 75.

At this point Haji Kader had invested about A$5000 into the setting up of his new factory to be. His death brought about the collapse of this project. Now Haji Abdul Raouf was in charge of the workshop which was heading for a rapid decline. The opening of markets for foreign imports brought to an end the days when rich clients bought silks for their own use or as luxury gifts. Luxury items such as watches and transistor radios rapidly took over the place of the traditional gift of silk. To make matters worse, Haji Abdul Raouf was pursued by continuous bad luck. In an attempt to modernise his workshop and increase his working capital, he associated himself with Kare Saber. His business associate was in charge of the shop in the market, while Haji Abdul Raouf busied himself with the production side. In 1959 Haji Abdul Raouf went on his annual trip to Qattaghan Province to sell silk scarves and buy silk cocoons.

He earned approximately A$300 from selling scarves and borrowed another sum in order to buy 144kgs of

Boiling silk cloth before dyeing process.

cocoons. Coming back to Aqcha he found his shop closed and was forced to borrow another A$75 to pay for the truck delivering the cocoons. His business associate had disappeared and could not be located. Luckily Haji Adbul Raouf still owned some scarves which he could sell to repay part of his debts. With the help of his accounting books he tried to establish a list of stock presumably still in the shop, which during Haji Abdul Raouf's absence had been closed by the authorities. The total value was estimated at A$4500. Rumours spread that his associate had been seen in another town and later had committed suicide. Haji Abdul Raouf filed a suit against him with the local government. They accepted his "gifts" promising to expediate the investigation. A year later, after having spent considerable sums on "gifts" and bribes for government officials, he was finally allowed to open the closed premises in the bazaar. His shock was complete when he found the shop empty. Now he had neither money nor stock left to revive his business and was forced to leave his premises in the bazaar to a Turkmen selling imported cottons.

He never recovered from this blow and began weaving and decorating on a very reduced scale. At this time most of his income came from selling silkworm eggs for breeding to local Turkmen traders, a tradition his uncle had started years ago. But this source of income also was soon to dry up, for in 1957 the president of the Baghlan sugar refinery founded the Silk Company. To deal with the improvement of silk manufacture, specialists and mechanical devices were imported from Japan. The locals did not like the silkworm eggs provided by this company and preferred the more resistant strain sold by Haji Abdul Raouf. In 1960 the Afghan Government forbade Haji Abdul Raouf to sell eggs and in 1972 silkworm-egg production became a government monopoly.

The final blow came in 1966 when Haji Abdul Raouf was erroneously put in jail together with a dozen other people carrying the same name. Released two days later, his beard and hair had turned white.

From this brief life history, patterns emerge that are typical for the general situation in Afghanistan.

Haji Abdul Raouf has a big household, in fact too big for his meagre income, a fact which is common in the rural areas of Afghanistan. He married at the age of 17. His first wife died in 1953 leaving him with two daughters and one son Mohammad Sali. He remarried in 1954 and from his second wife has three sons and three daughters. To increase the family income his two older daughters are making carpets from wool acquired in an usurious credit arrangement. Mohammad Sali was his best helper in the workshop. Quarrels about money unfortunately led to the split of the family economic unit, a factor which further endangered the viability of either of the economic units. Nowadays silkworms are only raised for personal use. The quantity is largely determined by the amount of mulberry leaves available in this arid zone. Due to lack of funds, he does not work at full capacity, in fact only two or three of his six looms are in use for six months of the year. During the dead season his two helpers peddle oranges and other commodities for a very small profit. The yearly trips to Pakistan have come to a halt. He still has outlets for his weavings in several towns in Northern Afghanistan, but during the slack season he peddles his scarves in the predominantly Turkic areas of Northern Afghanistan.

Weavers and dyers are not highly regarded in Afghanistan. Economic and commercial success are more important than artistic talents. Among all the craftsmen I had visited, Haji Abdul Raouf has the best reputation, probably because he is the last weaver to command such a variety of techniques. Last but not least he is also the descendant of a formerly rich business family, a reputation which still remains.

In conclusion I would like to stress again that Haji Abdul Raouf is the only craftsman in Afghanistan who masters all the major silk-weaving and decorating techniques formerly practised to perfection in Bukhara. This knowledge is unused for want of capital and outlets! His craft is a vanishing one although he and his colleagues have tried to bring traditional textiles into fashion again. There exists a strong feeling of disappointment and resignation which manifests itself in an ever increasing simplification of patterns and techniques and in the decline of good quality.

What can be done to solve this problem?

First of all local governments need to be made aware of the existence of the problem. Awareness of the situation should then lead to the creation of self-help projects encouraging the preservation of traditional patterns and techniques.

In an effort to contribute to the preservation of a dying craft, I have secured *temporary* outlets for Haji Abdul Raouf's scarves. This is not enough. He and his colleagues need short term financial assistance and a regular market which will give them economic security, an incentive to preserve traditional techniques and good quality . . . and some hope for the future!

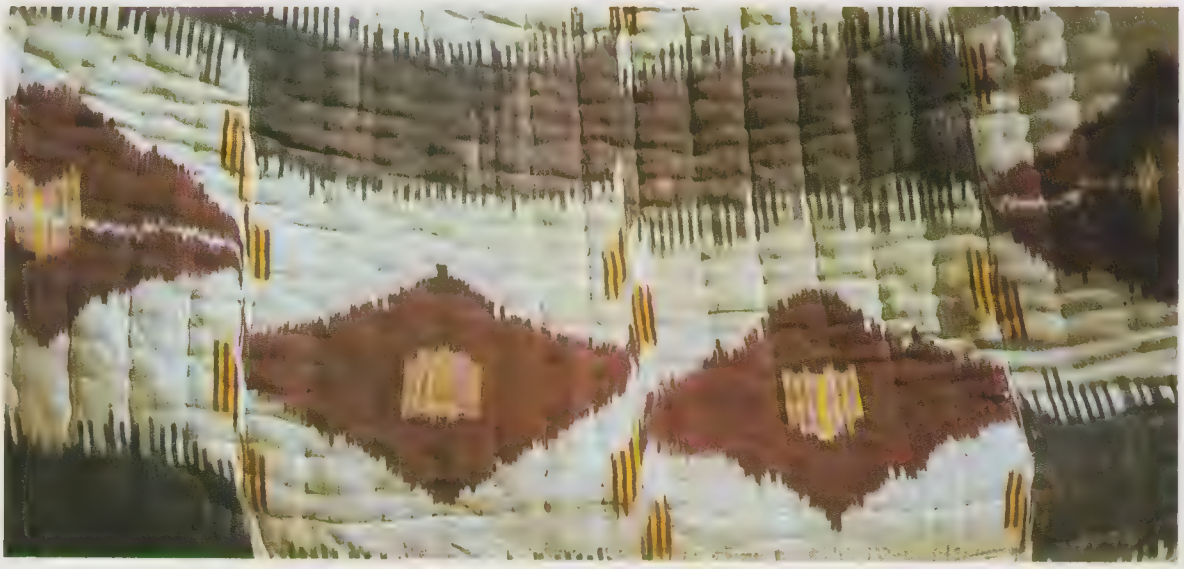
Anneliese Stucki

Printed scarf

Tiedyeing silkcloth

Printed scarf

Printed scarf



Old Ikat pattern

Crafts as a Livelihood Australia

Joy Warren

In a quiet country backwater, a typical Queensland farmhouse stands in a mown paddock beside a gravel road. Only the calls of the butcher bird and the pheasant coucal break the quiet. Under the house a radio softly crackles while a rhythmic tapping echoes along the verandah upstairs. Two people are busy at work.

Jim Warren is in his workshop under the house. If the radio is off, no sound is heard as he plaits his leather whips and bridles. Joy works upstairs on the wide verandah. Her workbench is a sturdy treadle machine table with a marble top. The harsh Queensland sun is soft and even on the verandah, the kind of light essential for her intricate leather carving.

Together, Jim and Joy work in leather. Jim specialises in plaiting, a craft he began whilst managing big cattle properties in the Northern Territory. In the early 70's they moved to Kin Kin in Queensland where Jim ran his own cattle. Gradually his work in leather increased. so that now the property runs only a few head of cattle as Jim makes a living from his craft, leatherwork.

To begin, he sent out letters to six saddleries in Queensland cattle centres telling of his work. Orders came in, then the re-orders flowed in. During the cattle boom Jim was hard pressed to keep up with the orders. With the fall in beef prices the flow of orders steadied. No doubt now that beef prices have risen again his business is booming.

Most of his orders are for working cowhide whips or the finer kangaroo hide whips. Commissions for fancy bridles are exciting for Jim who enjoys intricate and challenging pieces. Once orders are filled Jim has little time for free experimentation but whenever he does produce this work the articles are quickly acquired. He rarely has items at home for display.

Carved handbags, wallets, ties and holders are the most popular lines for Joy but commissions for leather tables are giving her a challenge she enjoys. Joy regrets that most orders don't allow more experimentation and individuality. Most people want a "copy" of something they have seen and it has taken Joy many years to ease people into wanting an "exclusive" piece of work, with Australian motifs.

Jim and Joy look forward to the day when more Australians will be able to appreciate the difference between good craftsmanship and mass produced items, when they will be willing to pay for that skill. In the quiet of their Queensland homestead this still seems a long way off.

L. & B. Hemmings 1979

A bull whip, strand Red Hide

One of Jim's finely plaited belts

Photography: L. & B. Hemmings

Jim Warren

Joy's work — a carved handbag, wallet and tie

Detail of bag showing finely carved Australian motifs

A lot of the Warrens' work is for country people and the motifs are of the country. On this belt Joy has done the carving and Jim the edge plaiting.

Joan Campbell: Training Scheme

Joan Campbell takes a moment to rest

You can find Joan Campbell MBE, potter of international standing, at her workshop gallery on the Fremantle waterfront. In fact the stone building is an original building of the Fremantle colony. It was a storeroom where longboats brought stores from the sailing ships standing at anchor in Cockburn Sound. The present gallery was also used as Fremantle's morgue. Later, other sections were added; the building became a boat workshop, then the Harbour and Lights Department took it over. Now it's a cluster of pots, wheels and kilns, the studio of Joan Campbell.

But Joan is not the only one working here. In the background several other potters are going quietly about their work. They are Joan's "associates", the result of a commitment by her to share the building and her knowledge of pottery with others.

"All the work is shared and the experiences of working are shared. I'm not on about people who want to make the exhibition scene because they see that as a measure of their progress. We're not concerned about reputation so much here. I'm on about people who are about craftsmanship."

Joan Campbell talks quickly. Bubbling with enthusiasm, yet thoughtful. A face full of expression with a beautifully warm smile, given emphasis by the movement of her hands.

Joan doesn't believe in the concept of throwing associates in at the deep end and seeing who survives. She sees a need to build the confidence of individuals and draw out their sensitivities.

"Everybody's at a different level when they come here, I have a sense where they're at. You don't have to do much to motivate people, their own sense of achievement when they see the progress of their work is enough.

"I love people who come here with lots of doubts — if you can get them to step over the line you always know they'll get there. It gives them depth to know what they can do when they're pushed. You have to let them experiment, muck up the pots and glazes, try it to see if it works and hopefully develop a level of consistent craftsmanship. But it's hard work. We often work 60-70 hours per week making domestic stoneware and earthenware pots, thousands each year. If anybody who came thought they were going to sit around drinking coffee and talking philosophy they're in for a shock — they wouldn't last anyway."

There's a pause. In the background some of the associates are working. Graeme Symons, ex teacher, is working on a plate. He came here to follow a commitment to craft. Graeme says it's probably the only place to work, in a studio and with a potter of national renown. It's an experience that he feels can't be measured in rational terms.

Mel Livesey is a lecturer in art education. He's here on study leave to add practice to the theory he's learned.

Julie Deague came here a year ago when she was 16 with little experience in crafts. After six weeks she was throwing 30-40 pots a morning.

For these people to have the privilege of working here costs Joan both her time and money, so there is a limit to the number of people that can work in the studio although so far she has had 14 associates. There are no wages paid but some of the money is recouped at an annual exhibition. It has taught the associates the reality of economics and the costing of objects. It also has shown them that an object needs to be technically good. But more importantly the work needs life, a human warmth in its making for people to respond to it.

"The first time we put together an exhibition I was broke. We put our work together and opened the doors. We were stunned, thousands of people turned up. It meant we were viable again."

You can feel it was a major triumph not just for the group but for Joan in particular and her attitude to training craftspeople by taking the load away from government funding by using self-help.

"After about nine months, people get about all they can from the situation. There's no resting here, they need to go on to new experiences to keep growing. I don't want to be a guru. There are always tears when people leave, but there's always something of them left, like the wall they repaired or a pot lying around."

Joan turns back to her work, almost oblivious, shaping a large sculptured arch for the East Perth exhibition. People move past into the gallery to look at and sometimes buy the work offered. On any day, there are always people there.

For Joan, the whole experience of taking people in and helping them develop as craftspeople is its own reward.

"People say I'm mad, they say it takes all my time and energy, I make less money and work longer hours. But

Entrance to the Gallery

A collection of pots from the studio

Joan at work on a freeform archway.

Graeme Symons and Mel Livesay at work in the studio.

there's a fantastic pleasure in seeing people become aware of themselves, becoming confident in their abilities. It's great to see them on that high of individual achievement and creativity. You know, my work hasn't been hampered but stimulated. In fact I think I'm doing some of my best work now."

Ross Bray

Ross Bray is a journalist working with the rural broadcasting division of the A.B.C.

Part of a screen of individual pieces bonfired with seaweed from the beach below the studio.

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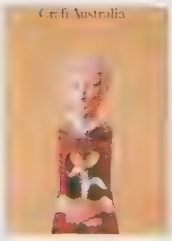

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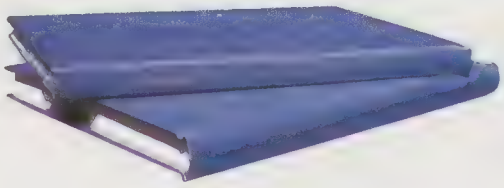

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Cost: $2.60 (includes postage)

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Critical Eye

The Art of Dyeing

Adam Rish, Rex Irwin Gallery, Sydney

The most exciting aspect of twenty-six year old Adam Rish's exhibition of batik 'paintings' held at Irwin's Gallery last May was the young artist's innovatory approach to an often maligned medium.

In spite of consistent efforts by many dedicated artist-craftsmen in recent decades, the craft of batik has fallen into some disrepute. The glories of the authentic, traditional patterns and colours have been replaced by horrors of crudely conceived and executed batik works of a highly obnoxious Westernised and often blatantly commercial form. Many attempts at adopting the traditional craft concepts to embrace Western design values and contemporary media have been conspicuous failures.

Adam Rish, born in England, but resident in Australia (educated in Hobart) since the age of 15, proved that the modernisation of batik techniques could be achieved in a way which was both aesthetically and technically admirable.

Although he has not enjoyed (or endured) any official art training, and in fact is a qualified doctor, he has been researching the possibilities of batik in an increasingly obsessive way since 1973 when some friends introduced him to the basic skills of the craft at the Nimbin Festival. In 1975 he visited Indonesia and made his way to Jog Jakarta where he discovered to his delight that he could indulge in experimenting with batik under experienced tutors at local schools for as little as one dollar (Australian) per day, all facilities included. Most of Rish's two months in Indonesia were occupied in exploring the possibilities of the technique of batik.

Since then he has been endeavouring in any spare time from his demanding medical studies to adapt his batik skills to suit his own special interest in colour and pattern-making, without resorting to obvious references to Indonesian traditional design.

The works shown at Irwin's were both lushly decorative and cynically amusing, revealing this artist-craftsman's unique sense of humour as much as his sensitivity to his medium. Rish presented his batik pieces as one-off framed and mounted 'paintings'. At first glance they resembled silk-screen prints with their bold shapes and clarity of design. Closer examination revealed a delicate handling of batik incorporating a time-consuming building up of pattern and colour until the desired statements had been achieved.

Titles such as 'The Bird Has Flown', 'Another Rotten Day in Paradise' and 'Tropical Fever' were sometimes an integral part of the total design concepts. An interest in collage and the art of juggling shapes and colours (Rish admires the work of elderly bed-ridden Matisse in this field) may have helped the artist-craftsman develop such a refreshingly sure sense of design to suit a given area. The scale was intimate and every square inch of the fabric-surface rewarding in its complexity.

A $1000 Visual Arts Board Grant has enabled Rish to move to Sydney. He is currently living in a renovated Leichhardt terrace filled with his batik and collage works and he intends pursuing his experiments with colour.

To achieve his special rather 'flat' areas of colour Adam Rish recommends dyeing the fabric in a large tank lined with plastic. In this way excessive cracking of the wax can be avoided. Rish also uses ordinary fine paint brushes to apply wax rather than more traditional methods.

Arthur McIntyre

Ceramics by Marga McEvoy

Marga McEvoy's recent exhibition of ceramics on display at the Benalla Art Gallery, Victoria, consists of thrown forms ranging in height from 12 inches to 36 inches. Decoration on these works consists of incising, slap application and the use of strong contrasting glaze and on-glaze enamels. The exhibition incorporates colour photographs which show some of the influences under which Marga is working.

The photographs range from Colorado snow fields, and autumn foliage, to Chinese terra cotta roof tops and temples. Despite strong contrasts, the exhibition has good continuity.

The incising techniques, glazing and on glaze enamelling in pots such as a dry white ash glazed urn show the influence of Colorado. Marga has moulded the clay in such a way as to give the effect that wind has on snow and sand. The on glazes are strong brown and red contrasting dramatically against a vivid white background. She has captured the harsh contrasts of winter snow fields in these reduction glazed pots.

Other works, which use oxidation glazes, give muted and subtle colours reflecting impressions of autumn. In these works in particular, using an oxidised white glaze with peach and blue enamels. Marga has rendered her impression of the coloured leaves of Autumn by painting on glaze enamels in an almost traditional china painting technique. These works have softer glazes, unlike the bold contrasting ones of her "winter" work.

Yet another contrast found in the exhibition, are the pots with a distinctly Chinese influence. One particular piece, a stoneware bottle with a celadon clear glaze and red black and white enamels has a motif taken from a temple. The shoulders of the piece have also been added to make them square, adding to its oriental feeling.

But perhaps the greatest impression China has left on Marga comes out in the forms of her pots. They are all very simple in shape and harmonious in design, which perhaps in ways sums up the very essence of classic Chinese ceramics.

Simon Robertson
Arts/Craft co-ordinator
Benalla District

The Constance Howard Book of Stitches — Batsford

Yet another book on embroidery stitches? What more can be said or written on this wellworn theme? But when the author is Constance Howard the hope is that something new and stimulating will emerge and this proves to be the case here. This is surely the book that all hand-embroiderers have been waiting for, a book which shows how stitches can be developed from the basic ones. For far too long stitchery books have given rigid instructions which workers have copied without appreciating the full range of possibilities.

Constance Howard in her recent tour round Australia showed her students many of these developments and spurred them on with her great enthusiasm. Earlier "Creative Stitches" by Edith John and "Stitches of Creative Embroidery" by Jacqueline Enthoven had attempted the same task but these books had relied on diagrams only and it was very difficult to visualise the final result. Constance Howard's book has seventy-five pages of close-up black and white photographs which show in detail how the stitches can develop.

This book will help everyone to extend their knowledge, and even better, it will help beginners to realise that there is nothing frightening about stitches.

There is a short introduction on stitch choice, on tonal values produced through change in stitch direction and on textures obtained by differences in type of thread and/or the tension of the worked stitch. The worker is advised to try out the basic stitch in all sorts of fibres and on all kinds of materials, using anything from nylon fishing line through wools to fine silk. Each fibre and each fabric will impart its own characteristic to the finished stitches. The main feeling that comes from the introduction is "experiment — play — make up new stitches — combine stitches to make new ones" but remembering all the while that there is a difference between badly worked stitches and free development.

The rest of the book is devoted to pages of stitch illustrations with notes opposite. It deals with a large number of the most commonly used ones but gives new ways of combining them and shows some new stitches. The photographs are good and clear and it is easy in almost all cases to work out the development of the variations from the basic stitch. However, in some of the illustrations the key does not quite tally with the worked piece — or the key is marked with letters which do not appear in the text (evidence of hurried proof reading perhaps?). Pages 34-35 are examples of this. Also the

idea of the key/photograph relationship is not quite consistent throughout but on the whole these defects hardly matter. It is also a pity that of the four colour plates, two have been transposed. However the delight of the workers (from the Tunbridge Wells and District Branch of the (British) Embroiderers Guild) who produced the samplers for this book comes across very strongly from the photographs.

Constance Howard now has three books in print "Inscription for Embroidery" (on designing and general ideas for techniques), "Embroidery and Colour" which includes a large number of exercises by means of which students can help themselves to an understanding of the use of colour, and now this "Stitches" book. These make a very useful — in fact invaluable — set for any library and particularly for one's own personal library.

Cynthia Sparks

The Royal Scottish Museum, Samplers

by Naomi E. A. Tarrant

Available only from: Royal Scottish Museum, Chambers St, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF, UK.

Price £5.50 plus postage.

This booklet is a complete catalogue of the collection of the 102 samplers in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. There is a full description of each sampler with details of stitches and patterns, together with a transcription of all verses and inscriptions, and information on the makers. Each sampler, and they are mainly from the British Isles, is illustrated in black and white and there is a bibliography.

There is also an interesting introduction to the booklet in which the author discusses the historic and social aspects of the samplers, explaining how they are decorative examples of a girl's skill in, what was considered to be, an important branch of housewifery. This is a very informative catalogue of the samplers held by the museum and I stress the word catalogue. It would be a useful addition to any reference library of the textile arts, either public or private, however as a book on samplers there are a few shortcomings, chiefly as far as I am concerned, the fact that none of these fascinating pieces of work are reproduced in colour.

Obviously there is the question of cost, but I feel that the educational value of such a booklet would have been greatly enhanced by the addition of at least two or three coloured illustrations. Also, for the student interested in studying samplers, the inclusion of a few areas in close up would have greatly added to the information from the booklet. Nevertheless it is a fascinating document, well researched and well produced.

Heather Dorrough

Stained Glass — A Plea For Thorough Knowledge

Advancement in modern glass technology has induced and assisted creative thinking in stained glass in a new and exciting realm. The medium is no longer an expression of some ecclesiastical dogma but very much a part of modern living, although the techniques of the present time have not changed, only advanced. No longer do we cut glass with a hot iron; build kilns of willow, ash, oak or elm and no longer do we have the pure approach to form that was a part of that earlier period of the craft, and which made it so unique.

There is no doubt that our new technology has produced many outstanding works, but it seems a pity that training in a craft shop has "advanced" to the degree that many simple craft methods of previous centuries are not taught. Were students to be taught some of these older methods, either in an historical and/or workshop context it would not only help them to have a greater understanding of the materials they handle but also interact with more recent understandings and practice, to produce a cross-fertilisation in creative ideas and forms.

Moreover the disciplined pedagogy, the step-by-step of other times with its attention to detail, together with the understanding and use of more modern methods would enable a student to accept, analyse and understand new techniques and practices as they arise in his experience.

Constructive ideas, attitudes, and practices should flow on from good training.

There are certain basic simplicities within this craft. For instance, simple tools are used: a knife to cut the lead, a stopping knife to manipulate it, solder and flux and the ancient recipe for cementing; glass and a cutter and so forth.

It is of prime importance that a study of light and its effect through transmission be the prime concern of any person taking up this craft. Look at a window — any one anywhere. Sit and digest the placement of colour, its relationship to juxtaposed glasses.

Look also at the use of lead. What is the overall effect and why are different sizes of lead used in one window? Due to the nature of glass and lead many restrictions exist within the craft, and when presented with a design produced by someone without that knowledge (and this is very often the case) then new problems have to be solved while retaining the elements of the original sketch.

A study of the properties of the transmission of light through glass are essential for the flat glass craftsman. Two terms that are used when referring to glass are pitch and tone. Pitch, like the keys of a piano run from bass to tenor to contralto to soprano. Tone is the similarity of light vibrations, balanced or opposed, between juxtaposed glasses.

For instance blue glass with a low pitch is warm, and with a high pitch can be cold and uninviting — even death-like. Low pitch glasses respond to dull light sources. When viewing an ancient window in a dull light there is a quality that moves the viewer from one side to the other, so that the glass is seen at its best and eventually as a whole composition.

Good colour selection based on pitch will naturally have softness and balance in tone. Place a high pitched glass in with balanced tone glasses and the high pitch will tone down in the total transmission. Reverse this and the low pitch will appear very dull and tend to destroy the unity of the piece. Dull glass is unable to control the high pitch, but with juxtaposed glasses of similar pitch the high is reduced and the colour variation in selection is enhanced to the degree that each colour registers as itself. A mixture of glasses is essential to overcome producing a bland flat image.

This kind of simple basic knowledge about glass should be inherent in teaching, along with all the technology that is available, and hopefully should prevent the production of statements in stained glass which reveal a lack of basic training.

Glass never ceases to fascinate and captivate the creative mind, whether the object is as small as a diamond or as large as a building of glass and steel. In Australia we should look to both the old simplicities and the new knowledge to provide our craftsmen with the right training to be able to enrich our environment and not to leave us with an imperfect inheritance of commissioned work which could have been better.

Kenneth Wildy

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,
I'm suffering from a severe identity crisis! Can you help?
Although mostly self-educated (aren't we all?) I have been privileged to attend so many institutes for art education that to list them all would embarrass me. My goal was training in textile design. Colour theory, life drawing, history of art, design, lettering and perspective were only some of the subjects studied. I visited many art galleries. Never did I question nor doubt that I was receiving training in art, nor that a textile designer needed to be an artist.
An opportunity arose to do free-lance work for a textile printing factory. This made me aware of the need for more understanding of the technical aspects of producing printed cloth. So I took up the study and practice of screen-printing.
It soon became apparent that in the textile field at that time in Australia, an artist should not only design, but be prepared to produce and market the work. I was neither temperamentally nor financially fitted to do this.
So, having acquired skills in screen-printing, I applied them to fine art work. Some of my prints were accepted for exhibition by the Print Council of Australia.
And I became aware of the public confusion relating to printmaking. It is now recognised that an original print is a work of art, differing from mechanical reproductions. But division of labour may take place during print-making; there can be collaboration between an artist and a technician (craftsman?) These two may be the one person, but the craftsman cannot act without the artist as originator.
May I suggest that art is something that cannot be taught, whereas craft is that aspect of art which is teachable?

During my long years of study and practice, was I in fact studying craft? Could it be correct that craft is that which results from the study and application of art?
Making clothes and furnishings; knitting, crocheting, rug-making and embroidery; these are all activities where materials are manipulated for a specific purpose. Nearly always the manipulation required is fairly simple. From an early age onwards, these and similar activities were part of my way of life, and regarded as a useful pastime. Were these activities craft? I thought so.

It seemed to me a very different type of activity when I tried to do portraits of my friends, to sketch a gum-tree, or to illustrate an evocative passage describing the Sirens — "three fair maidens sitting on a beach, beneath a red rock in the setting sun, among beds of crimson poppies and golden asphodel" Not craft, but what? These activities were discouraged and denigrated. Could they have been some form of art? I thought so, at the age of fourteen.

Now I work with wax resist and dyes, and it is called craft. It involves every atom of knowledge and skill that I have acquired, and more. It is far more demanding. To rectify a mistake in this medium is next to impossible. In no way do I regard this activity as to do with applying a decoration to cloth. I am not making objects, except in the sense that an oil painting or water colour or drawing is an object. I am exploring the interaction between waxes and dyes as a means to objectify an idea, and to create an image. It doesn't seem to me to have anything to do with craft as I understand the word.
Has the term "craft" come to mean: an object brought into being by means of skills and knowledge beyond the scope of academic art?
I am aware of languages where no distinction is made between art and craft. In Australia there is an important distinction — it is related to the amount of tax payable on sales. We also have a Visual Arts Board and a Crafts Board, so someone evidently knows the difference.
Do we define "craft" as that activity funded by the Crafts Board?
I don't need funds. But I certainly would like to know when art stops being art and becomes craft, or perhaps the other way around. I don't know the difference anymore.
Is there anyone out there who can help me?
I am a Batik Painter.

Ketha Carter
100 Were Street
Brighton Beach Vic 3186

Thanks for good criticism

It was a great pleasure to read Mr Kim Schoefftan's contribution in the last issue of Craft Australia. But what *is* a pity is that so many people I have spoken to about it do admit having seen it, but haven't got around to reading it — yet! I only wish that writers of the calibre of Mr Schoefftan were more readily available. Too often most of our criticism is based on back-fence observations that has little to offer, except perhaps to highlight the lack of real information available to the writer. So it is pleasing to read something both right and authoritative. I do recommend that those people interested in something a little bit more intellectually tough than what one usually reads in what passes for craft criticism *do* read Mr Schoefftan's article.

And whilst having pen in hand, I am in no way handing out a 'male C.P.' compliment by placing this comment in second place, but I applaud Ms (Medlin) La Motte's contribution, 'Sexism in the Crafts'. I do not know if there is the degree of sexism practised as Ms La Motte claims, but if it is so, a lobby expressed as forcibly as Ms La Motte's is more valuable than spray-can protest. Perhaps some of our self-professed craft critics would do well to put Ms La Motte's assertions under scrutiny.
Anyway I am sure that the editor (sorry, editress, or is it female editor) would be happy for any good piece of written insight.

Milton Moon
Summerton Pottery
Summertown SA 5141

Indeed he/she would!

The Editor

Subscription Drive

FREE OFFER

Do you enjoy receiving Craft Australia?

We feel from your letters that you do and that we have a very loyal following of readers. So we are proposing to ask for your personal help in gaining new subscribers for the magazine.

The strong possibility of cut-backs in funding poses a direct threat to Craft Australia as you know it. If we are not subsidised for 1980 we will be $20,000 short of our needs in producing the full colour magazine that you enjoy.

However, if we can get 1500 new subscribers we will have made up the deficit ourselves. Will you help?

If all our subscribers gained one more new subscription we would have a total of 10,000 subscribers — so it shouldn't be too hard to get 1500.

To encourage you to seek another subscriber we are offering a free copy of 'Women In Australian Craft' (advertised on page 48) for each of you who gains new readers and sends a subscription(s) in on this special form. Please do your best to help us and to ensure the continuation of Craft Australia at its present high standard.

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Please send me your quarterly magazine Craft Australia. I enclose cheque/money order for $14 for one year. Overseas price $18.

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(Mail to Craft Australia, 113 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000)

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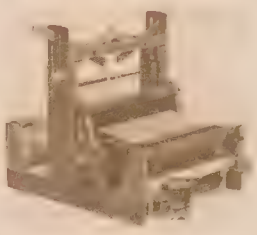

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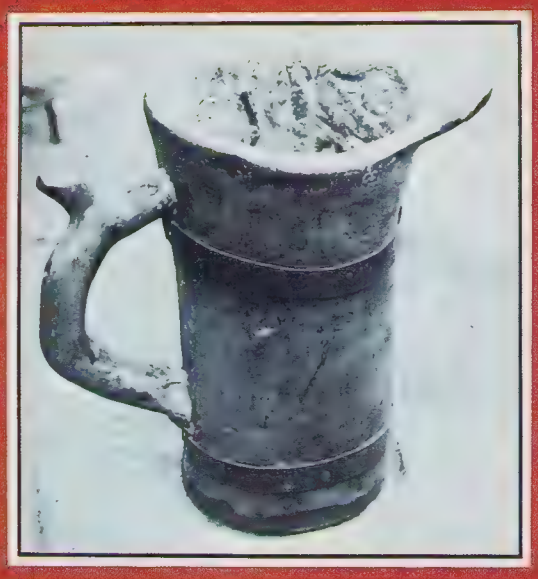
Murray Walker



This book is a survey of the exceptional range of craft skills which evolved in a country where the alternative to 'making do' was doing without.

It explores a period of unparalleled creativity which ended when the handcrafts of life were replaced by mechanisation; when handcrafts became indulgences of leisure.

Special price
$17
order form at front of book

Its 172 pages are printed in black and white, with photographs dating back to the 1880s.

TOUCH

News from the Crafts Council of Australia

Issue 6

Craftsmen in the Alice Springs Community

Henri and Josi Luijckx who have their own studio in Cherryville near Adelaide, South Australia have spent the last three months as craftsmen in residence at Alice Springs giving their time and energy very generously to the whole community.
Henri is a potter who trained in Holland and had the opportunity to register with the Dutch Government for a lifetime artist's stipend for which he would only have been expected to produce work for an official exhibition once a year, but chose instead to migrate to Australia and to take his chance in a country where potters are not greatly appreciated.
Josi is a weaver specialising in fabric weaving although she also produces imaginative wallhangings.
They set up their studio in Cherryville seven years ago and have been very successful. A hard working couple fully committed to their crafts, they are also very conscious of obtaining markets with the result that they have achieved what many craftsmen would like to have, a professional income for professional work. Henri estimates that he can produce pots to the tune of approximately $400 a week and Josi can earn $200 a week from her work. This means of course that they both work extended hours to meet their commitments.
Taking this kind of energetic commitment into the community at Alice Springs was an inspiration to local craftsmen. The programme that Henri & Josi Luijckx just naturally accepted would have stretched most craftsmen to the limit. They were quite happy to teach in all the local schools and colleges, to have week-end workshops, to teach craftsmen at home in the evenings, to give public lectures and demonstrations and to be at the Crafts Council office and centre for three days each week to assist members of the community, as well as giving private lessons. Also the Luijckxs planned and worked for an exhibition at the end of their stay. Additionally Henri carried out research into clays in the area and was particularly interested in the clay tiles being produced at the convent of Santa Maria of the Sacred Heart not far from Alice Springs.
"I think a local tile industry would greatly benefit Alice Springs. Tiles on these houses would cool them down and add tremendously to the look of the place."
Henri who feels that his pottery will improve from his community experience in the centre of Australia sees the light there as very Mediterranean. "I am 90% Australian now in my work. The only Dutch thing left is perhaps the shape of my pieces. All the rest, the surface treatment, the feeling stems from my love of Australia and the landscape. Josi and I have gained a great deal from coming to Australia. We have been very happy to give something back to the community."

The Studio at Cherryville

August Conference

A strong spirit of co-operation between the state councils of the Crafts Council of Australia was the major impression left by the mini-conference (held in Sydney on August 24/25) to discuss crafts in the 1980s. Discussions on projects proposed by various states for next year led to a very positive approach to exchange exhibitions, and to discuss priorities in the total range of projects.

Perhaps for the first time since the formation of the C.C.A. the strength in unity of all the state crafts councils was realised.

Discussions on project budgets and costings in general led to the proposal of a more uniform approach to state and federal funding bodies.
The possibility of publishing a national information brochure was discussed with some interest, and there was also a discussion about a national newsletter.
The delegates reaffirmed some of the C.C.A.'s priorities including the importance of education and of communication, particularly the printed word.

Manuscripts Wanted

The Crafts Council of Australia would like to receive copies of philosophical articles on craft subjects from craftsmen and writers with a view to possible publication in Craft Australia. Academics who are working on theses which have topics touching on the crafts or on contemporary life as it relates to the crafts and who are interested in publication should contact the Editor, Craft Australia, 113 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Mrs Vanderbilt Webb

Death of World Crafts Council Founder

Mrs Aileen Vanderbilt Webb who was the founder and for many years honorary chairman of the World Crafts Council died peacefully in her sleep on August 17th 1979.

A tall elegant woman whose humanitarian impulse to help craftsmen during the American depression led in time to the formation of a world organisation, Mrs Webb will be greatly missed wherever craftsmen meet to discuss problems on an international level for she was as well known in Fiji or Mexico as she was in New York.

Mrs Webb's introduction to the crafts was in 1930 when she launched the Putney County Products in the area of her summer home outside New York. She hoped in this way to help gain more sales for local craftsmen. Later she established America House in a marketing outlet in New York. After that the American Crafts Council, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts and the magazine Craft Horizons were all established. In 1945 the School for American Craftsmen began in New England again with help from Mrs Webb. Now at the Rochester Institute of Technology it is a major institution.

In 1964 at a national conference, Mrs Webb with her lifetime friend Mrs Margaret Patch organised the World Crafts Council.

Her work for craftsmen everywhere was outstanding. At great personal cost both financially and spiritually she worked for a better understanding of the crafts and of the lifestyle and motivation of craftsmen all over the world.

It was Mrs Webb's invitation to Australia to participate in a world conference that precipitated the need for a delegate from an Australian organisation. This was the catalyst which in time produced the organisation of state associations, the Crafts Council of Australia and the whole lively craft movement in Australia. Like craftsmen in so many other countries Australians have a great deal by which to remember Mrs Vanderbilt Webb.

Puppet Maker will be next Crafts Council Fellow

David Finlay, a lecturer in art and design at St Martin's school of art London, who has a particular interest in puppetry will be the 1980 Crafts Council of Australia Fellow.

He will follow Michael Cooper, wood craftsman and sculptor from California who has been working in Queensland and Western Australia as a craftsman in industry during 1979. Michael Cooper will leave Australia to take up a fellowship with the American Academy in Rome.

David Finlay, the new Crafts Council fellow is expected to become involved with puppet theatre in Australia as well as environmental work in the community. He has had experience in both these fields.

In 1974 he established a touring puppet theatre company called the Aesop Emporium and to date this group has entertained more than 25,000 people and has been included in the Edinburgh Festival.

In 1978 he received a grant to carry out an environmental project at the Charles Lamb School, Islington where with fellow artists he managed to turn a potentially vandalised school into a community resource.

In Australia Finlay hopes to develop new modes of small scale puppet representation suitable for touring and to research and develop how portable elements such as banners may be used to transport an everyday space into one with a theatrical atmosphere.

Back numbers price increase

Back numbers of Craft Australia are becoming rare journals and in accordance with general practise it has been decided to capitalise on the rarity by increasing the cost of all back numbers to the current price of Craft Australia, $3 per copy plus .50c postage.

However the Crafts Council of Australia realises that many schools and libraries as well as current subscribers may not yet have had the opportunity to buy the back issues they need to complete the series, so the rise will not come into effect until January 1st, 1980.

Until that date back numbers will be sold at the original prices shown in our advertisement.

There are only ten issues still available and some of these have less than a hundred available, so we urge you not to delay if you wish to acquire back numbers.

Catalogues

I have stocks of slightly damaged catalogues as follows:

Fred & Mary Marer Catalogue
16 Page providing biographical information on 33 Potters with 21 black and white photos.

International Exhibition of Miniature Textiles
Black & white illustrations of the work of 80 craftsmen from 19 countries together with biographical details.

These may be of interest to individual craftsmen, teachers and others. They are free except for the cost of postage. Those wishing to purchase these catalogues will be advised of the cost for postage as this will vary depending on order.

Please contact Kay Morrissey, Crafts Council of Australia, 27 King Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

Western Australia's Craft Caravan.

Peggy Buckingham is one of the most recent craftsmen to take part in the Craft Caravan project which allows craftsmen to work as craftsmen in residence at primary schools.
Peggy who has been a joint co-ordinator of the scheme with Ray Sampson, of the Department of Education, took a turn as participator when she went down to Graylands Primary School. At this school there are a number of Vietnamese refugees who took very readily to weaving, one of the age-old disciplines of their people. In fact one small boy was so pleased to be involved in back-strap weaving again that he spoke for the first time since coming to Australia.
"The caravan has been a tremendous idea," Peggy said. "It has demonstrated that craftsmen are not different but part of the everyday world. And it has given the whole school wherever it has been, the opportunity to see a craft activity through all stages from the raw materials to the finished object."
The caravan project was initiated two years ago, a joint Education Department/West Australian Crafts Council project assisted by the Western Australian Arts Council and the Crafts Board of the Australian Council. The caravan itself which is parked in school grounds belongs to the department and the craftsmen remain at the school for a period of six weeks. As the children come out for recess, lunch or in the afternoon the craftsman is at work and additionally special classes are held. Looms and a potters wheel are available for the caravan. At Graylands the class of 12 Vietnamese children aged from 10 to 12 made their own backstrap looms and began weaving bags. Their teacher found that the weaving was the best language learning experience they had had, and was also helpful in teaching numbers.

Peggy Buckingham with Vietnamese pupils and their teacher at Graylands Primary School.

Stefan Szonyi

Gold Medal for Stefan Szonyi

Stefan Szonyi of Victoria has been awarded a Gold Medal at the 37th International Competition of Artistic Ceramics at Faenza Italy.
His work which has a delightful whimsicality was on display at the Crafts Council of Australia Gallery on two occasions — in the first exhibition The Twelve Days of Christmas when he presented figures under a glass filled with fluid like a Christmas bauble and again before the Australian entries were sent to Faenza. The pieces for Faenza included "Tumbling Figure" a handmodelled figure in earthenware which was balanced to tumble from one end of the piece to the other, "See Saw" a similar piece and various Australian souvenirs like "Dog Souvenir Shaker" and "Cat Souvenir Shaker" in porcelain.
A very talented young man who was born in Germany and studied painting at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, he is a self taught ceramist.
He has exhibited in group shows in various Australian states and is represented in regional galleries in Victoria.
Stefan Szonyi's gold medal is the ninth win for Australian potters at Faenza. Other potters who have received awards are Peter Travis, Col Levy, Derek Smith, Shiga Shigeo, Les Blakebrough, Bernard Sahm, Sandra Taylor and Christine O'Loughlin.

Christmas Gift Subscription

Why not send a Craft Australia subscription to a friend as a Christmas gift? If you send your order to us in advance of Christmas we will post the first issue of the subscription issue 1979/3 to your friend/relation enclosing a gift card indicating the gift is from you.

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Diary of Exhibitions

ACT

Beaver Galleries
Nov 11-25 Red Hill Ceramics
Peter Dobinson
Dec 2-21 Soft Sculpture

Narek Galleries
Nov 25-Dec 16 Tharwa Nomadic Rugs

Solander Gallery
Yarralumla
Nov 9-25 Jewellery
Tony White

NEW SOUTH WALES

Aladdin Gallery
Sydney
Oct/Nov Bead tapestry & wood sculpture

Hogarth Galleries
Sydney
Oct 20 Annual Exhibition of the C.C. of NSW

Wollongong Art Gallery
Oct 31-Nov 30 Japanese Packaging

Macquarie Galleries
Sydney
Dec 5-22 Ceramics Milton Moon
Stefan Szonyi

Blackfriars Gallery
Sydney
Dec 2-16 Ceramics
Jeff Mincham

David Jones Gallery
Sydney
Oct 29-Nov 17 Sculpture
Noel Grey Stone

Potters Gallery
Sydney
Nov 13-Dec 1 Ceramics
Vincent McGrath NT.

QUEENSLAND

Queensland Crafts Council
Brisbane
Nov 2-30 Embroidery
Gladys Spiers

Queensland Potters Association
'Potters Gallery'
Nov 2-22 Ceramics
Joan Webster
Nov 30-Xmas Members Xmas Exhibition

Victor Mace Fine Art Gallery
Bowen Hills
Nov 11-25 Prints
Brian Dunlop
Dec 2-15 Ceramics
Peter Rushforth

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Bonython Gallery
Nth Adelaide
Nov 3-28 Ceramics
Greg Wain
Dec 1-21 Jewellery
Thomas McHugh

Jam Factory
St. Peters
Nov 9-Dec 3 Textiles & Clay
Winnie Pelz & Anne Werger
Dec 8-Jan 6 Ceramics & Precious Metals
Ben Kypridakis & John Cherry

Studio 20
Blackwood
Nov 9-30 Mixed media
Margaret & Clive Simmonds

TASMANIA

Design Centre
Launceston
Oct 26-Nov 28 Wood Craftsmen
N.C.A.F.D.I.

VICTORIA

Sale Regional Arts Centre, Sale
Nov 8-22 Print Council Exhibition
Nov 19-Dec 3 Sale Tech. School Senior Students Exhibition

Makers Mark Gallery
Melbourne
Nov 12-24 'Presentations'
Silver & metal

Gallery 180
Sth Yarra
Nov 4-16 Ceramics
D. Williams
Nov 18-30 Doug Alexander

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Museum & Art Gallery
Darwin
Oct 15-Nov 18 Navajo Blankets

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Fremantle Arts Centre
Nov 1-Dec 2 Ceramics
Graham Carr, Joel Smoker & P. Douglas
Dec 6-23 Silver Jewellery
Ross Williams
Dec 12-Jan 6 Environmental Exhibition
Joan Campbell

Undercraft Gallery
WA University
Dec 4-19 Clay Wood Metal